Commentary

Volume Sixty-six, Number Five, November 1978

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Nathan Glazer

Blacks, Jews & New York Politics
Dorothy Rabinowitz

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Music:
Wagner's Holy Family
Samuel Lipman

Books:
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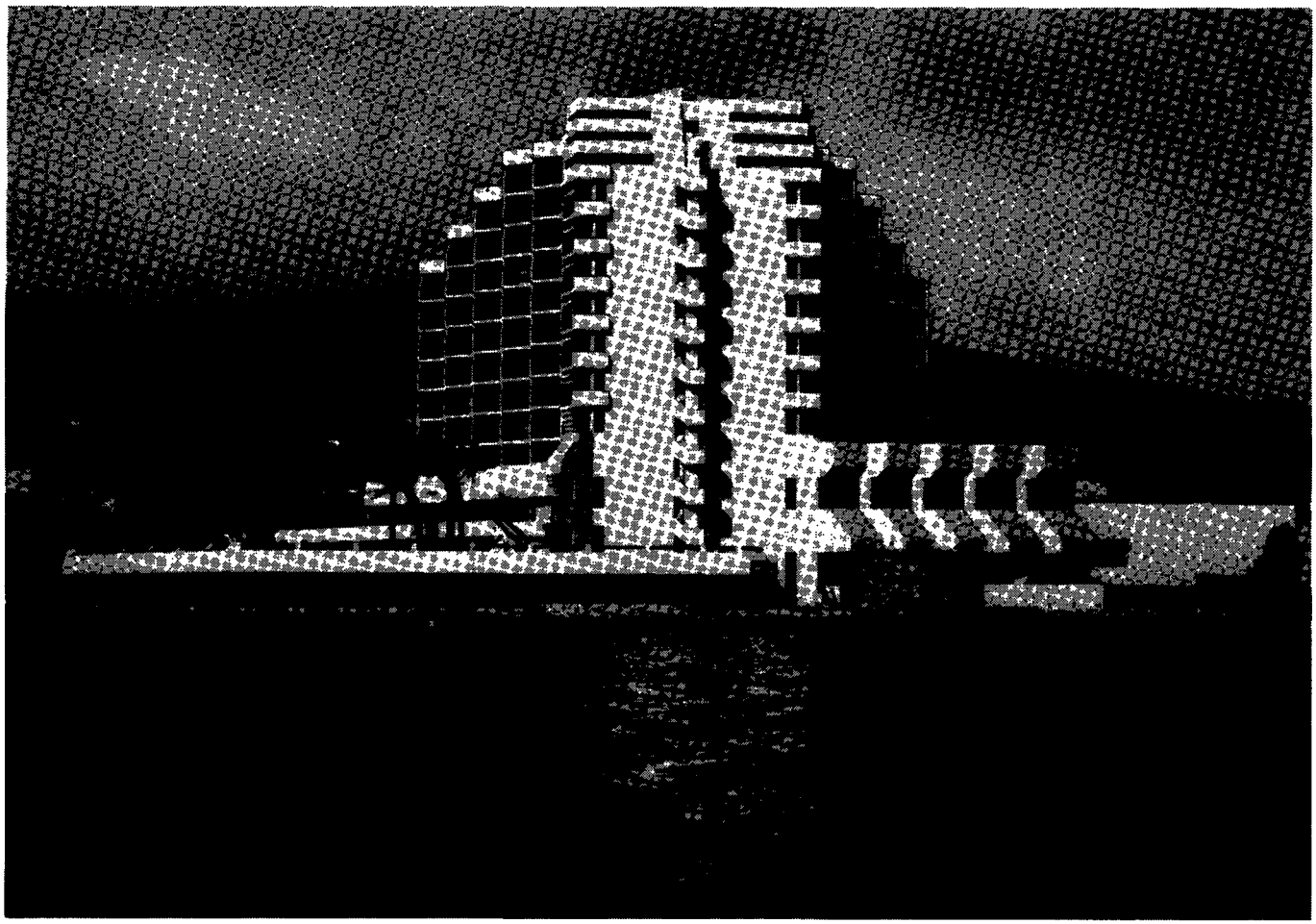

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Commentary

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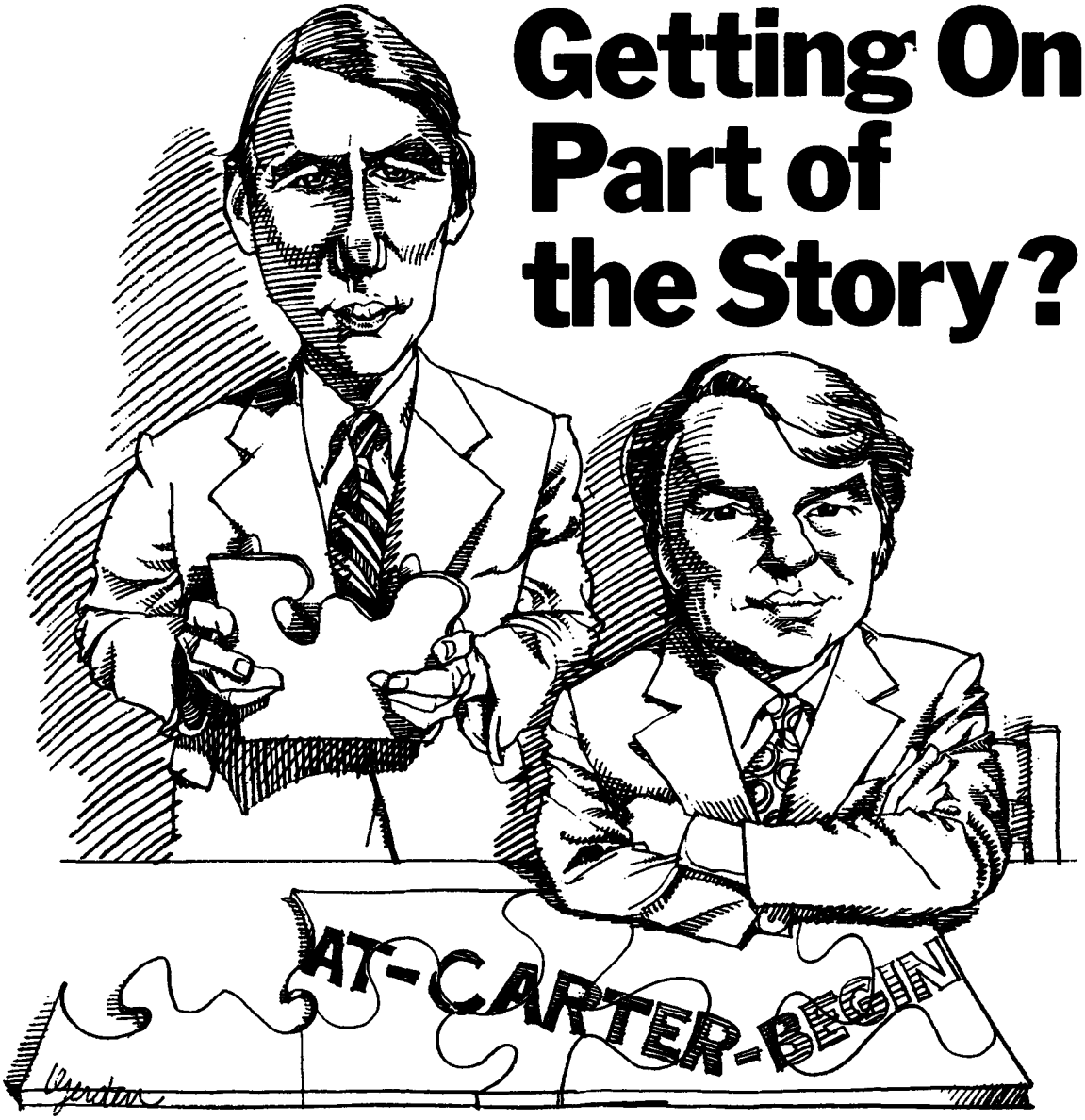

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Letters from Readers

Russia & the CIA

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Several years ago the leadership of the CIA was very upset over demands that the CIA's budget be revealed. These leaders indicated that revealing the CIA's budget would aid the enemies of the United States. Yet after reading Lev Navrozov's article ["What the CIA Knows About Russia," September], I wonder if their motivation might not have been different: would not revealing the CIA's budget have caused many people to ask whether we were getting our money's worth?

Are we?

BERNARD L. ALBERT
Scarsdale, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Lev Navrozov indicts aspects of the American way of life, not unlike the manner in which Alexander Solzhenitsyn, in his address at Harvard, deplored certain contemporary features of life in the U.S. . . .

The author speaks of not being able to "count on" the media, or on the academy, for a clear understanding of the USSR. He implies that this is because of fundamental weaknesses within these two institutions. As for the media, they are in the business of selling entertainment, he says, so nothing substantial will be forthcoming from them. In the academy there seems to be total confusion, or at least pluralism run wild. (Probably Mr. Navrozov would agree with Solzhenitsyn that campuses are hotbeds of left-wing obfuscation.) The intelligentsia displays the "Salisbury syndrome," attempting to understand another country—in this case, Russia—by means of simplistic shortcuts like listing the "eternal verities about Russia" or attempting to master Russian as a foreign language by setting down the "elements of Russian" on an old piece of cardboard. . . .

Finally, Mr. Navrozov implies that outright stupidity seems to be a chronic illness in contemporary America. . . . Coupled with our stupidity, apparently, is an ingrained naiveté and lack of sophistication. . . .

Now, it *is* true that the author is careful to attribute the naiveté, the ignorance, the stupidity, and the overall lack of what the Greeks called *arete* to certain actual institutions—above all, to the CIA. But more than implied is a larger indictment involving . . . national intelligence. . . . And Mr. Navrozov may be right. . . .

It may indeed be true that our over-the-counter culture (and over-the-counter-counterculture) has diminished the national quota of intelligence, and that the performance of the CIA is merely a reflection of this. We may be paying a price for our short-cut, miniaturized, and small-brained approach to many things, be they material or spiritual. . . . To use a Marxist term, we have become "cretinized." . . . We are aware of this cretinization in the media, despite —or because of—the new TV offerings for the coming year, or any past year, for that matter. . . .

We are also all too well aware of the declining reading and comprehension levels afflicting our society. Needless to say, the effects of this decline in intelligence will be telling upon all institutions, including, of course, the CIA. . . .

Finally, we have permitted a way of life that can only be called amoral. This way of life includes the myths of "me first" and raised consciousness; . . . . the pop-science and pop-culture cheapening of our intellectual coin; and a host of other phenomena that horrify foreign visitors or new citizens such as those who have come from intellectual circles in the USSR. . . .

And so, it appears that Mr. Navrozov's plaints addressed to the CIA may have been aimed at a wider doorstep—the one at which Solzhenitsyn laid his charges.

ALBERT L. WEEKS
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . In his witty and hard-hitting article, "What the CIA Knows About Russia," Lev Navrozov . . . notes the 1976 CIA admission that the agency was wrong in estimating Soviet defense spending by a very wide margin indeed. But one has the feeling that this is just the tip of the iceberg. What other wrong information about Soviet military and political activities has been passed to our government from our intelligence-gathering services these

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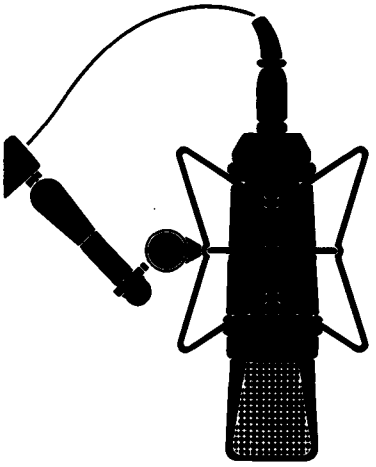

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past years—information on which policies disastrous to American security were predicated? The fact that Senator Proxmire was "puzzled by the way the Soviet rulers have been acting during the last decade," according to Mr. Navrozov, who quotes from an unbelievable encounter between the Senator and CIA experts, is evidence that something is dreadfully wrong somewhere. If the CIA cannot clarify matters for Senator Proxmire, may one not assume that the puzzlement extends right up to the top of the administration? We know that in one administration after another, Democratic and Republican, there have been presidential advisers who pooh-poohed any information that bared the real scope of the Soviet military build-up and the imperialistic thrust of the USSR, but one always wanted to believe that our intelligence services had their facts straight to begin with. Alas and alack!

MATTHEW CONROY
News World
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Lev Navrozov deserves to be listened to and read by all those who are responsible for our foreign policy—not so much because he questions the CIA projection of egg production in the USSR, or the discrepancies in the use of steel tonnage produced, but because he warns us about the meaning of the language the Russians use to influence us. I do not know why they manipulate egg statistics, but there is no mystery about the steel. The "missing" steel has already shown up in Afghanistan, Angola, Libya, Ethiopia, Syria, Yemen, and Iraq, to mention some of the recent recipients of Soviet armaments.

Are people like Mr. Navrozov alarmists, or are they an almost extinct breed of people who . . . know that the information which filters through to our decision-makers is often not the reality? It follows that decisions based on faulty information will be bad, incomplete, and even dangerous to our future. The theory of two CIA's, one which testifies to congressional committees and the other which "really" knows, could be an amusing scenario for a TV series; but it is a deadly serious assumption, which could put us all to sleep—in more ways than one.

JOSEPH GOTTFRIED
Flushing, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

So many preconceived and firmly ingrained notions are upset by Lev Navrozov's "What the CIA Knows About Russia" that we may be tempted to brush it aside. Yet this is too facile a way out. Though the examples he cites may not be fully persuasive, nothing available to an outsider refutes him, and much circumstantial evidence would seem to bear him out.

PAUL W. FREEDMAN
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In "What the CIA Knows About Russia," Lev Navrozov has overstated his case to the detriment of what seems to be his prime objective: to encourage a stronger U.S. response to the USSR. It is possible to be alarmed at the Soviet military and naval build-up of recent years, to be concerned with the need for an enlarged and more determined U.S. reaction to it, without taking the roundhouse swipes that Mr. Navrozov does at non-Russian expertise on the USSR. No doubt those who have lived under Soviet power during the past sixty years, who have suffered at its hands and managed to escape, have a different view of it and the world than the rest of us do—with good reason. And their opinions and insights should be considered. But, as Mr. Navrozov's article indicates, in his case and in the case of many other recent Russia-leavers, their dread and detestation of the Soviet regime is so intense that their views of the USSR, its past as well as its present and future, have become distorted. They seem to have difficulty in accepting the fact that contemporary Russia is not to be explained only by the post-1917 experience, but also in great part by the two-thousand-plus years of national experience antedating the Bolshevik coup. The Mongol invasion, particularly as it cut Russia off from the Renaissance and the Reformation, *has* played a significant role in producing today's Russia. And Russians *do* have a "national historical fixation on the problem of invasion." What else is to be expected when there has rarely been a quarter-century during the last two-and-a-half millennia when Russia has not been invaded? It is not necessary to know what takes place in the "consciousness of the average Soviet citizen" (how can we *know* what takes place in the "consciousness" of

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Business and the rational mind, Part VII

Energy solutions and nonstarters•Where a government role is needed•Accent on achievement

Is there a role for government in the energy business, or should the government just stand aside and leave it to the energy companies?

Of course there's a role for government—an important, affirmative role. An essential role. That's just the point: The government seems incapable of comprehending what role it should play and how it should play it.

Many of the country's energy problems today stem from government's inaction in critical spheres at crucial times in the past. As a result, some of our present problems are soluble only if the federal government plays a stronger role—of the right sort.

As we have said over and over during the past seven or eight years, what is essential is a comprehensive national energy policy, to set goals and to create the parameters and establish a climate within which the private sector can operate efficiently.

- Only government can set forth national goals and work out the necessary compromises to reconcile conflicting regional and other interests and to recognize the natural priorities among various energy sources.

- Only government can develop the ground rules under which private industry must work.

- Only government can formulate a national policy on environmental trade-offs that will strike a sensible and workable balance between unacceptable environmental risks and unacceptable economic risks.

- Only government can hammer out the sort of balanced policy that does not permit extremist approaches to environmental protection to delay for years progress toward achievement of national goals on energy.

It seems to us that the policy formulated by the government should, among other things, recognize the need for reasoned and balanced economic growth to create jobs for a growing population and to enable more and more disadvantaged Americans to attain a higher standard of living.

Having struck a reasonable and rational balance on fundamentals, the nation should then, we believe, develop a timetable with quantified goals for such component elements as crude oil, natural gas, coal, and nuclear power, liquefaction and gasification of coal, oil from shale, and, in a longer time frame, energy from more exotic sources. In our view, this should not be a finely detailed blueprint, but rather a clear and unequivocal statement of basic energy goals. The primary goal should be greater energy self-sufficiency.

For at least the rest of this century, conventional oil and natural gas seem certain to remain our primary energy sources, and the only other two major sources on which we can count with any certainty are coal and nuclear power. In the real world, there is no feasible alternative in this time frame.

It seems to us that joint industry-government task forces are essential to make sure no important piece is omitted from this extraordinarily complex jigsaw puzzle. Prohibiting the participation of people with firsthand knowledge of the energy business and with years of experience in it can only produce the sort of Rube Goldberg energy program that has been debated on Capitol Hill the past 18 months or more.

The United States has the resource base, the work force, the technical skills, the management, and the organization to meet its future energy needs. Given realistic policies, including minimal regulation of the marketplace, industry can probably raise the huge amounts of capital required. In the last analysis, however, it will be the rate of return on capital—that is to say, the profitability—of the energy industries that will determine how much gets done.

We recognize the burden that higher-priced energy places on the economically deprived. To the extent that there is a serious adverse impact on the poor, government should deal with it directly—by subsidy to them if necessary—rather than by a general distortion of fuel prices. Arbitrary controls that delay the development of additional supplies will only aggravate the problems of the poor.

Unless we assure ourselves of the energy required to sustain the well-being of the American people, no arms or armament can assure the nation's security, nor can social programs of whatever sort assure its stability.

The question of whether there is a role for government in this answers itself: There is an essential, affirmative role for government—a role that, unfortunately, the government still seems unable to comprehend or unwilling to play. And this is the crux of America's energy problems.

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anyone except ourselves, and even there we may have doubts?) to be quite certain of that.

The immediate military threat from the Soviet Union is real, and we should be greatly concerned about it. But it is also necessary to be calm and objective in gauging that threat and in determining the best methods of meeting it.

DAN N. JACOBS
Department of Political Science
Miami University
Oxford, Ohio

LEV NAVROZOV writes:

Bernard L. Albert's concern is long overdue: the taxpayers' money intended for defense and survival has been used as a kind of fraud or hoax. But who is to blame? The taxpayers. The Soviet regime is owned by a single omnipotent group which has a vested interest in the regime's expansion and hence in securing the best intelligence data. No such group, in fact no group at all, "owns" the United States. The White House consists of temporary, moderately paid officials who can easily avoid doing anything difficult, and can actually do harm. If the taxpayers simply pass their money on to their elected or appointed representatives, be they the White House or the CIA, but refuse to be interested in what their representatives are doing with this money in the field of defense and survival, what can the taxpayers expect in return? Just what they have been getting. If American patients automatically paid all medical bills sent by whoever cared to take their money, American medicine would regress centuries within two generations. Why should the field of defense and survival be different?

Albert L. Weeks's letter is a case of mind-reading: the problem he poses is a subject I am now working on. At the moment, I would only like to make a brief comment. In any free society, some individuals become more intelligent and creative than the most intelligent and creative people in any totalitarian society. Others, however, become "cretinized" because they find happiness in being so, and this is their inalienable right. In this respect, there is nothing we can rail against except human nature in its infinite variety. The tragedy we can and must avert lies elsewhere: talent and intellect in the West are absorbed mostly by "serious" (usually commercial) fields, while fields like defense and survival are considered to be a kind of high-class welfare for well-bred gentlemen. These fields, therefore, get mostly the leftovers—a few talented and intelligent individuals and an ocean of "cretinism" in which these individuals sink.

Matthew Conroy, Joseph Gottfried, and Paul W. Freedman bolster my optimism and confirm my belief that it is possible to change the situation by rallying intellect and talent to the defense and survival of the non-totalitarian world. After all, thirty-five years ago Goebbels said with disdain that the United States had only one opera house, and even that consisted of imported singers. What would Goebbels say now? The fact that the science and art of Western survival do not yet exist in the West (few individual exceptions notwithstanding) does not mean that they will never flourish, given will and awareness.

Dan N. Jacobs's letter is of value because it is the standard response of academic and government experts on Russia to a Russian analyst's probe of their work. Mr. Jacobs objects to my taking "roundhouse swipes . . . at non-Russian expertise on the USSR." I *do* contend that a very great deal of the output of Western experts on Russia is worthless, if not fraudulent. Given elementary research opportunities, I could show this, as I have shown it for the CIA's expertise on Russia. Take a single example. In 1974, American newspapers published the CIA's figures for "Soviet defense spending," figures which were absurd. More than a thousand institutions in the West are concerned with the study of Russia, but not a single one of them ridiculed or even questioned these figures. Those experts on Russia who did question them account for a tiny fraction of the total. What is the value of more than a thousand institutions if none of them can notice ridiculous elementary mistakes in their professed field?

Characteristically, Mr. Jacobs does not say a word on the subject of the article: the ineptitude of the CIA. It is not even clear whether he agrees or disagrees that the CIA is inept. Instead, he argues *ad hominem:* since I "lived under Soviet power," and "suffered at its hands," my "views of the USSR,

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its past as well as its present and future, have become distorted." By implication, those experts at the CIA or Miami University who have not lived under Soviet power are "calm and objective." Now, as it happens, I personally never suffered under Soviet power. On the contrary, financially I belonged to the very top in Russia. For another thing, my article is not "overstated" (whether on account of my supposedly unbearable suffering or from some other cause), but is actually understated. Mr. Jacobs can pick any section in the article and I will be glad to supply the rigorous and complete demonstration on which the section in question rests.

Finally, Mr. Jacobs's excursion into Russian history says very little—although it says it with an air of sloganeering finality—about the real history of the more than one hundred nations of Russia, but a great deal about the spread of what Mr. Weeks justly calls the "Salisbury syndrome" among American experts on foreign affairs.

The ACLU

To the Editor of Commentary:

Joseph Adelson [Letters from Readers, August, in a discussion of his article, "Living With Quotas," May] believes that I owe him an apology for including in my letter to Commentary the precise response he sent to a colleague of mine who sought the factual basis for his linking what he called "thuggish" behavior by some members of the Harvard Medical School with life membership in the ACLU. Mr. Adelson's response to my colleague was an extension and purported explanation of his original comment, contained no confidential information whatever, nor was it so designated, and I assumed, mistakenly it appears, that he would be glad to have his explanation publicly aired. Nonetheless, for my failure to seek his permission to reproduce his letter, I do apologize.

And now, I ask in turn that Mr. Adelson have the grace to apologize for his wholly gratuitous and unsupported original comment about the ACLU compounded by his later alluding to that organization generally as representing "the curious juxtaposition of repressive behavior and liberal posturing."

Samuel Hendel
Trinity College
Hartford, Connecticut

To the Editor of Commentary:

I have read the exchange in the August Letters columns between Joseph Adelson and Samuel Hendel. In the course of that exchange, Mr. Adelson accuses Mr. Hendel of violating his right to privacy. It is, I think, a silly charge.

Mr. Adelson wrote an article for Commentary. By doing so, he sought public attention for his views. Along the way, he sought publicity for an attack on the ACLU. Questioned about that attack, he wrote a letter to someone acknowledging that he had no basis for his attack on the ACLU other than his dislike for it. Mr. Hendel challenged Mr. Adelson's attack on the ACLU and quoted from Mr. Adelson's acknowledgment that his attack was without basis.

Comes now Mr. Adelson and cries foul—you violated my privacy in quoting that letter. What makes the charge silly is that he argues that he is entitled to publicity for his charges and privacy for his confession that they were baseless.

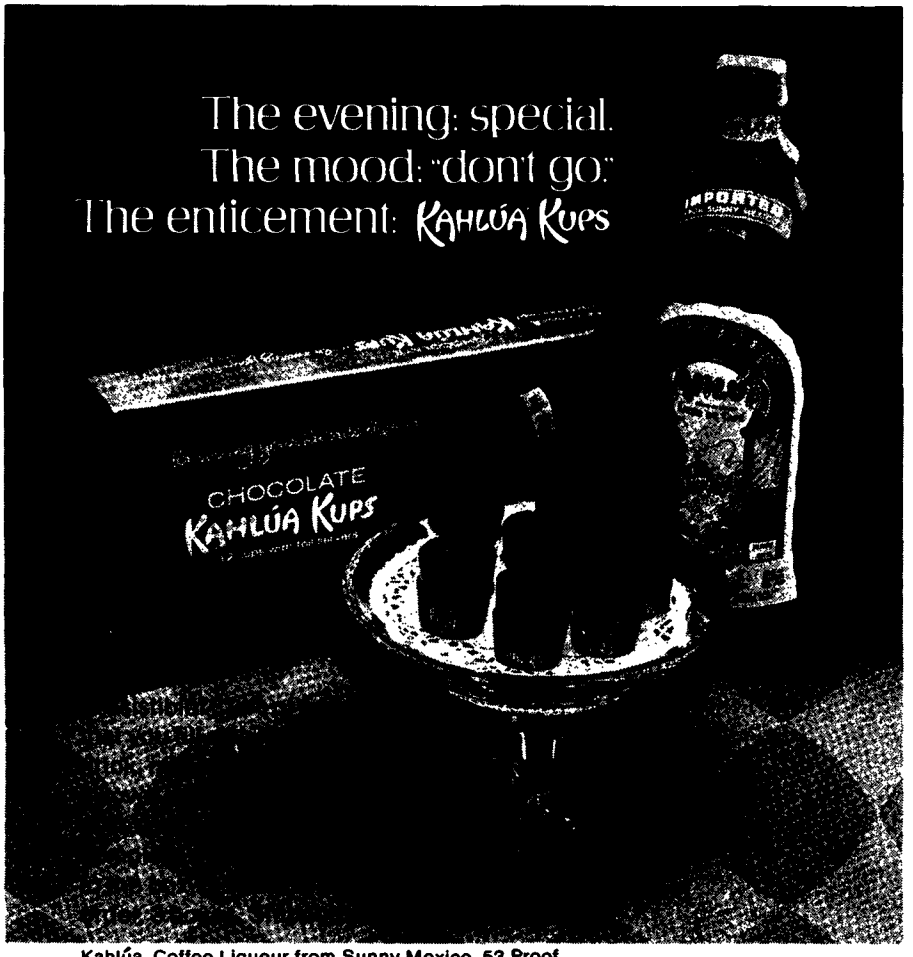
Consider a hypothetical analogy: a scientist announces he has made a study in which he has shown that red-haired people have lower intelligence than other people. Challenged, he writes a letter to another scientist acknowledging his study was based on no research. The recipient gives the letter to yet another scientist who quotes from it in refuting the study. Does anyone think that is a violation of privacy? Of course not.

One final comment: Mr. Adelson uses such words as "thuggish," "degradation," and "contempt" in his debate with Mr. Hendel. He justifies "thuggish" as speaking plainly. The only thing that is plain to me is that adjectives of that sort are a substitute for reason.

Aryeh Neier
American Civil Liberties Union
New York City

Joseph Adelson writes:

In a marvelous article on the ACLU published in Commentary some years ago ["Politics and the



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ACLU," December 1971], Joseph W. Bishop, Jr., of the Yale Law School, said that the "disease of utter humorlessness . . . is endemic among ACLU activists." He also pointed out that Aryeh Neier's predecessor had "an unfortunate talent, amounting almost to genius, for overstatement." Clearly nothing has changed. We are involved in this absurd exchange because of Samuel Hendel's humorlessness, and now Mr. Neier has provided us with an example of ludicrous overstatement. All that bluster is designed to conceal the one important truth emerging from what is otherwise a tempest in a teapot—that Aryeh Neier, the great civil libertarian, does not believe in my right to privacy of correspondence, not if he thinks he can turn that correspondence to his polemical advantage.

Mr. Neier's failure to grasp that there is a civil-liberties issue here does not surprise me, since it reflects the larger moral and intellectual confusion of the ACLU in the last decade. The ACLU confuses its purposes with the agenda of fashionable liberalism, and as a result cannot bring itself to recognize that the proponents of "progressive" causes have become our greatest threat to freedom of expression. Note that both Mr. Hendel and Mr. Neier are concerned to defend the honor of those who tried to bully Dr. Bernard Davis, of the Harvard Medical School, but they have no word to say about the violation of Dr. Davis's right to free speech. That is how it goes with the ACLU these days. The campuses of this country have been the scene of dozens, perhaps hundreds, of serious threats to freedom of expression—by militant feminists, homosexuals, and the like. Not a peep out of the ACLU, on the whole—though I recognize that it is a large and divided organization, and that some state groups have acted quite well. With Mr. Neier now leaving the scene, and with the political climate beginning to change, there may be an opportunity for the ACLU to rediscover its original sense of purpose.

Poland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Like Ruth R. Wisse ["Poland Without Jews," August], I spent some brief days in Poland coping with my roots. In my case, it was

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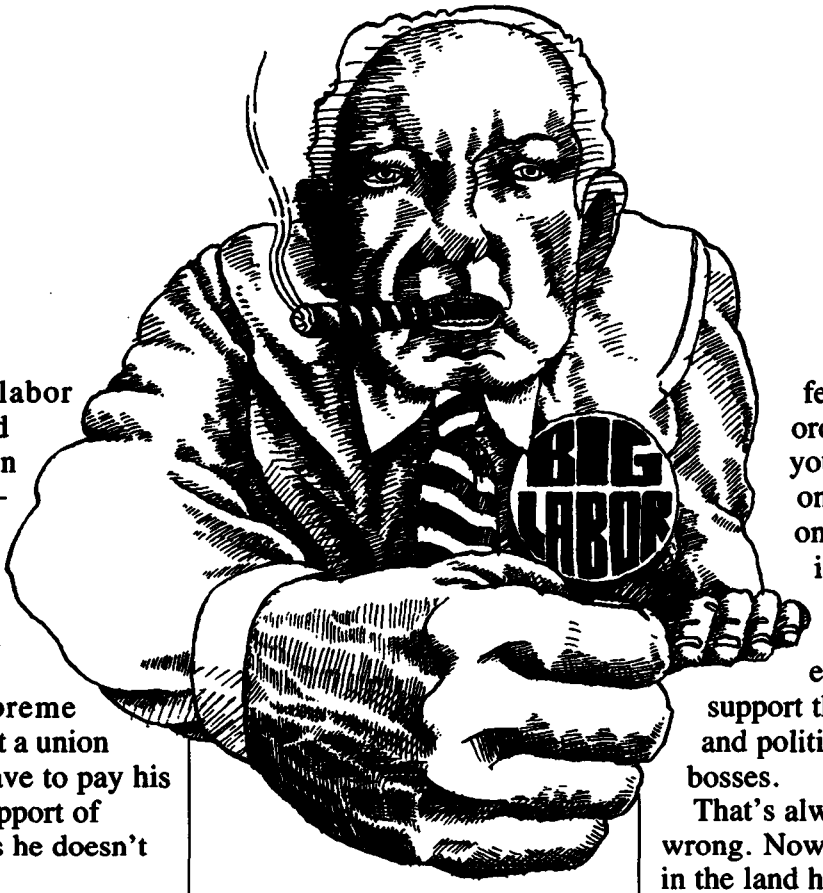

Organized labor will spend more than $100 million in direct and "in-kind" support on political campaigns this fall—a lot of it illegally.

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That's why a Michigan teacher, a California airline ticket clerk and other American workers are waging a different kind of political battle this year. They are telling their unions they don't like the candidates and causes their union dues and fees are going to.

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The Foundation took the case all the way to the Supreme Court, which unanimously ruled that it is unconstitutional for union officials to use compulsory dues or fees for political purposes.

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two ten-day trips, during which I returned to the scene of my parents' childhood and pre-World War I flight, and the places where death came to virtually every member of my family.

Any return by a Jew to the Poland of his or her parents, to the scene where one of the largest and most vibrant Jewish cultures thrived and was snuffed out, means total immersion in bitterness and disbelief. Can only these traces be left, after all those years? If the traveler is alone, the traveler remains alone, isolated from those around him by the emotions. Even with an occasional Jew, few words can be found to express what is felt.

Yet unlike Mrs. Wisse, I returned from my visits with another view of Poland and the Polish people, somehow to be fitted in alongside the antipathy that is part of my group baggage. For almost beyond my conscious will, exposure to Poland made me aware, too, of the terrible sufferings and humiliations of the Polish people over the centuries, climaxing when virtually all of Warsaw was razed by deliberate Nazi plan while the Russians waited outside the city for the deed to be done before they marched in as conquerors.

It does not diminish Polish brutality to the Jews to acknowledge Polish suffering and be horrified by the historical fact that two scapegoats could not unite their strengths for mutual survival. There were some exceptions—my cousin lives today in Warsaw married to the Polish Freedom Fighter who saved her life—but the price of group hatred surely must be one of the bitterest pills one carries home from Poland.

So far as I can tell, it is simplistic to see this as one-sided. How did it start? We were forced to be separate; we chose to be separate. Who knows what the historical mixture was? I only know my parents never thought of themselves as Poles, nor were they unique. It is the children and grandchildren of the emigrants who want to see Poland again, not the ones who left. Despite the centuries in Poland, the Jews *were* sojourners in Poland, visitors to the land but not of it. It was this very isolation that gave the Jews in Poland their distinctive, inward-searching mystic culture. It was this separation that makes one blindingly angry when Polish history is rewritten to erase the fact that Jews lived and died as Jews, not as Poles.

Six hundred years of visiting Poland should be recalled, memorialized, and returned somehow to the fabric of Poland's past. As Jews, however, we cannot have it both ways.

PHYLLIS MYERS
Washington, D.C.

RUTH R. WISSE writes:

The historical assumptions of Phyllis Myers are mistaken and hurtful. In no balanced view can the Jews, who were part of Polish society from its very beginnings, and who enjoyed a high degree of economic and cultural interdependency, be described as an isolated group, with an "inward-searching mystic culture." To accept Isaac Bashevis Singer's stories as the historical reality of Polish Jewry is much like deriving American history from Hawthorne. The Jews may have considered themselves sojourners in a messianic sense, but in hardly any phase of their Diaspora have they been more entrenched than in Poland. The well-known legend even explains that the name of the country, *Poyln* (Poland), is the Hebrew *Polin:* here you rest. If anything, after a spate of expulsions, Poland was home.

It is also hard to see how Miss Myers's American idea of "separation" can be applied to Poland, where the distinction between citizenship and nationality was a reality right into the modern period. So the Jews—and other minorities—believed that they could maintain a distinctive national identity and still be allowed to live. Is this "having it both ways"? Surely it is the Poles, appropriating the Jewish past—not to speak of some of its goods—without even adequate acknowledgment, who are attempting to have it both ways. This, indeed, was a point of my article.

Unlike Miss Myers, I was aware of the terrible suffering and humiliation of the Poles long before my trip to Poland. But it never occurred to me to regard this suffering as something that would excuse the Poles from their civilized duty.

University of Chicago

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I share Kenneth S. Lynn's dismay over the proposed cosmetic changes in the Harvard college curriculum ["Son of 'Gen Ed,'" September]. I would only differ with Mr. Lynn on his analysis of the Chicago college program and the implications which can be drawn from that experience. Mr. Lynn is correct in maintaining that Robert Maynard Hutchins's enthusiastic support for a revivified, self-contained college was necessary for the college's later success. But I think that Mr. Lynn exaggerates Hutchins's role in the successive attempts to create a distinctive undergraduate program at Chicago, most particularly with respect to the crucial 1942 reforms.

Hutchins's vision for the college, influenced in large measure by Mortimer Adler (whom Hutchins had brought to Chicago), centered on introducing some form of a Great Books program as the *sine qua non* of the renewed college. However, that curricular dream was resisted and ultimately dashed by the college faculty, driving Stringfellow Barr and Scott Buchanan to realize a Great Books program at St. John's College in Maryland. The college which evolved at the University of Chicago in 1937 was therefore a compromise, still belle-lettrist in orientation but less circumscribed than the Great Books program.

The 1942 reforms, the unique, lasting contribution of the college to liberal education, yielded a program quite different in conception and design from the 1937 program. The 1942 plan was not the Hutchins plan. Rather, it drew its inspiration from the epistemology of the classicist-philosopher Richard McKeon. McKeon's Aristotelian passion for exploring knowledge categorically was joined by a Deweyan concern for producing an educated, democratic polity resting on a significantly shared set of intellectual experiences. The uncertainty surrounding World War II probably eased (rather than hindered) the adoption of these far-reaching reforms; McKeon's true believers carried the day against a faculty who were too busy with the war effort to focus clearly on the implications of the McKeon scheme.

The power of the McKeon analysis can be seen in its subsequent application into ever wider learning contexts, even as institutional pressures diluted the program within the college. (See *Science, Curriculum, and Liberal Education,* edited

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by Ian Westbury and myself, and to be published this fall by the University of Chicago Press, for an example of the way Joseph J. Schwab continued to pursue McKeon's ideas in diverse educational settings.)

The history of the Chicago college suggests that a mere sense of crisis is not enough to generate a significant reform of undergraduate education. It may have been Hutchins's genius, perhaps, to have brought McKeon to Chicago, but it was the vitality of the scheme itself, rather than Hutchins's crisis management, which provided the context of the 1942 reforms. Schwab *et al.* were not merely reacting to a feeling of curricular turmoil; more importantly, they were positively attracted to a distinctive, exciting approach to the problem of educational knowledge—"The Knowledge Most Worth Having." This sense of shared intellectual purpose, a community if you like, by the program's true believers, allowed institutional meaning to be given to the McKeon scheme and sustained the ideal through subsequent educational experiments. Without McKeon's conceptual scheme there would have been no significant 1942 reforms, no matter how serious the . . . sense of crisis.

Therefore, it is not simply, as Mr. Lynn suggests, a matter of Harvard's failure to approach curriculum reform as a fundamental reexamination of the context and content of its undergraduate education. Even if the reexamination were to occur, it is doubtful that a conceptual framework of sufficient creativity and substance exists to forge a modern-day community of Harvard College true believers. . . . Between professional narcissism and a dominant role in the expanding bureaucratic state, it is hard to imagine that Harvard will succeed in creating the kind of mediating intellectual community so necessary for bringing about a significant change in its undergraduate program.

NEIL J. WILKOF
University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois

The Menorah Journal

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I see that Elinor Grumet found a typeset but unpublished article by the late Lionel Trilling in the *Menorah Journal* archives, now housed in Cincinnati, and it was published in COMMENTARY under the title, "The Changing Myth of the Jew" [August]. The introductory note says the article had been accepted for publication in the *Menorah Journal* in 1931 and set in type, "but for some reason it never appeared."

Almost certainly the reason was that the *Menorah Journal* was badly hurt by the Depression, had to cut back its publication schedule severely, and therefore had to forgo publishing much fine material (in manuscript or even galley form). In 1931 only two issues could appear: in March and June. Similarly, in 1932 only two could be gotten out, and in 1933 only one. I recently came across a carbon copy of a letter in my files, written by my father—the late Henry Hurwitz, editor of the *Menorah Journal*—to a friend, in which he sought help with an overdue out-of-town hotel bill . . . for $25; the banks were closed, there was no money to pay *any* bills, and my father and mother had to find pennies to buy bread and milk for my brother and me. (Not many people can still realize how it actually was in those years of the locust.)

Lionel Trilling, as it happens, was one of many young Jewish talents, in literature as well as in art, given encouragement and a "platform" by Henry Hurwitz and the *Menorah Journal*. Jewish writing and art were not fashionable or lucrative in those days, and Hurwitz, in doggedly fostering them, was a combination dreamer and Quixote. Trilling's earliest appearance in the *Menorah Journal*, when a youth of twenty, was in June 1925, where a short story of his called "Impediments" may be found in the regular *Menorah Journal* column called "Commentaries." This was his first published story.

The following year, the *Menorah Journal* published his "Chapters for a Fashionable Jewish Novel" (June-July 1926), and "A Friend of Byron" (about I. Nathan, August-September issue). In August 1927 Trilling's story, "Funeral at the Club, with Lunch," appeared and in April 1928 (by which time he was on the faculty of Hunter College) he was back in the "Commentaries" section with his "A Light to the Nations." In May 1929 his story, "Notes on a Departure," was printed. Several book reviews by Trilling ran in the *Menorah Journal* during the years 1925-31: for example, in the October 1930 number, a review of Charles Reznikoff's novel, *By the Waters of Manhattan*. (Reznikoff's poems under this title had appeared in the *Menorah Journal* issues of April 1929 and May 1930.)

The subject of Trilling's 1931 article, "The Changing Myth of the Jew," is treated in greater detail by the late Montagu Frank Modder in his volume, *The Jew in the Literature of England* (1939). The late, great Cecil Roth, who himself knew what there is to know on the subject, reviewed it in the winter 1940 issue of the *Menorah Journal*. (The book was reissued in paperback by the Jewish Publication Society and Meridian Books, 1960). . . .

Coming closer to home and our own day, the image of the Jew in American literature was traced, in all too brief compass, by the late Leo W. Schwarz in his 1966 lecture, "Mutations of Jewish Values in Contemporary American Fiction," delivered at Syracuse University (in the B. G. Rudolph Lectures in Judaic Studies), and published in pamphlet form. It should surely be given broader circulation by reissue in an important magazine. Schwarz was a "*Menorah* man" from his student days at Harvard: he appeared frequently in the magazine; edited the "valedictory issue" (Autumn-Winter 1962); discussed the *Menorah Journal* with Robert Alter—whose "Epitaph for a Jewish Magazine" appeared in the May 1965 COMMENTARY; and edited *The Menorah Treasury*, published by JPS in 1964. (Schwarz's untimely death several years ago was a sad loss to Jewish letters, as was Trilling's death.)

Like Mrs. Trilling, I am grateful to Miss Grumet, for she has been diligently working with the *Menorah Journal* papers at the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati. (By vote of the *Menorah Journal* board of governors, . . . the vast *Menorah* archives were assigned to the AJA, where Jacob R. Marcus and Stanley F. Chyet labored nobly to organize them into researchable form.)

As for salvaging unpublished *Menorah Journal* nuggets and nursing them into print, I too have been busy, and am pleased, for example, that a memoir by Henry Hurwitz, about his childhood in Lithuania, his youthful years in Boston and Gloucester, and his

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mother, Bella Wolfson Hurwitz, is scheduled to be published in 1979 in the *American Jewish Historical Quarterly*.

DAVID LYON HURWITZ
New York City

The Foreign Service

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Stephen A. Schuker concludes his review of *A Pretty Good Club*, Martin Weil's book about the Foreign Service [Books in Review, September] by criticizing the recent deemphasis on competitive examinations and the substitution of subjective criteria for selecting Foreign Service officers. I am now retired from the Foreign Service, but would like to point out that, judging from my own experience, the Foreign Service managed to employ subjective criteria even when it maintained rigorous competitive examinations.

In 1946, I passed the examination given in Germany to soldiers awaiting transportation home and a resumption of civilian life. I was one of five who were summoned to . . . Washington for the oral exam, the final hurdle.

Of the other four, I recall only the one who directly preceded me. His last name was Epstein and he had been a sergeant in the army. He came out of the "star chamber" crestfallen, saying that he had been turned down as immature. I thought, there go my own chances, for immaturity had been the bane of my existence. I had remained a private first class until discharged from the army, and though that discharge proved I was twenty-four, bartenders inevitably accused me of stealing, forging, or borrowing my discharge papers. . . .

But the examiners did not say a word about my obvious lack of physical maturity, and the questions they asked required no notable degree of mental maturity to answer. Those concerning foreign affairs came right out of the Sunday New York *Times*, which I too had read thoroughly. Others revolved primarily around my native Wisconsin and its land-grant college, of which I was a graduate. I could only conclude from this experience that I was a "rara avis" of the type the Foreign Service was seeking in those days.

ROBIN E. STEUSSY
Eugene, Oregon

Bombing Auschwitz

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I have just read Milt Groban's letter in the July issue commenting on David S. Wyman's "Why Auschwitz Was Never Bombed" [May]. . . . During World War II, Mr. Groban was a radar navigator-bombardier with the U.S. Fifteenth

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Air Force in Italy. I was a pilot with the Eighth Air Force Heavy Bombardment Group, stationed in England, and I find that in his letter Mr. Groban presents . . . a distorted picture of the capabilities of the U.S. air force. He claims that we were not able to do precision bombing ("we really could not drop a bomb through a pickle barrel from 3,000 feet"). . . . But in fact we could hit the proverbial barrel on the ground, or at least come very close. For example, my crew received a Lead Crew Commendation in 1944-45 for hitting the "Pig Pens" (submarine yards) at Wilhelmshaven, Germany, with our squadron of eleven planes. Each plane carried between 4,000 and 5,000 pounds of bombs (about 50,000 pounds in all) and all the bombs landed within 500 feet of the main targets. We used radar, G-box, etc., as well as visual sighting, since the cloud cover was dense that day and cleared up only at the last minute. I might add that 90 per cent of our bombs fell right on target, which is dead center within a 50-foot radius, with the other 10 per cent falling within a 150-foot radius. . . .

Mr. Groban is also misleading in his claim that RAF bombing equaled ours in accuracy. The RAF did "pattern" bombing—that is, RAF planes bombed a square area several hundred yards in length and width. Although they certainly hit the target, they also hit everything within the targeted area regardless of military value, while we pinpointed our targets with more precision. . . .

Mr. Groban claims, finally, that had he been given the command to bomb the killing installations at Auschwitz, he would have become the "ultimate Kapo." But . . . there is no question that thousands of innocent men, women, and children would be alive today if we had bombed those barbaric horror chambers and destroyed them. If I had been given the command to bomb the camps, I would have been proud to have been chosen for such a mission. . . .

CHARLES M. BACHMAN
White Plains, New York

Money & Energy

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

A single sentence in Samuel McCracken's reply to John E. Chappell, Jr. [Letters from Read-

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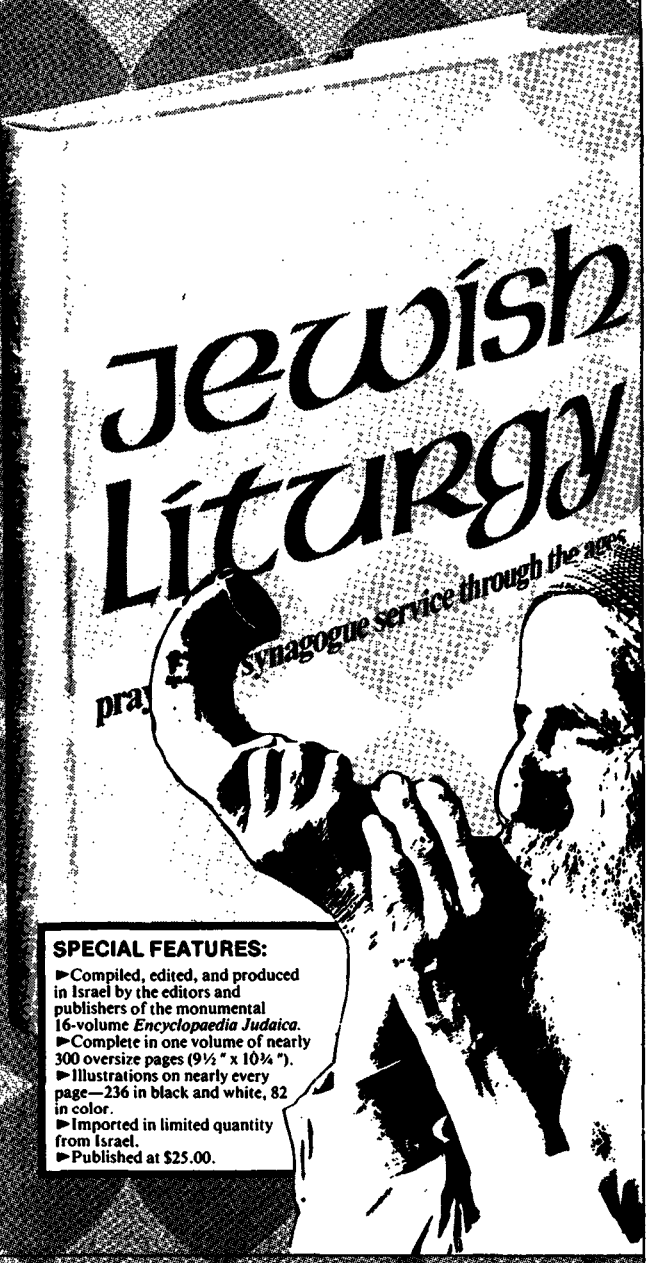

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ers, March, in a discussion of Mr. McCracken's article, "The War Against the Atom," September 1977] stands out like a laser beam in a candlelit room and perhaps provides the key to understanding Mr. McCracken's love affair with nuclear energy as a (the?) major source of energy for the next decades. The sentence is: "Mr. Chappell's assertion that different funding patterns for energy research would obviously produce different results reminds us that there are people who really believe that problems can be solved by throwing money at them." It is a curious thing to have chosen this particular notion with which to deride Mr. Chappell and other critics, since the feasibility of nuclear energy is perhaps the prime example in our recent history of a problem which was solved by having money thrown at it. The fact that dedicated and intelligent people were available to use the money does not make the point less legitimate. They would have accomplished nothing without the resources. To name but a few more areas where the infusion of money was critical: the space program, second- and third-generation computers, oral contraceptives, modern telecommunications, and a host of lesser technical and medical advances. Social problems, which are perhaps more akin to Mr. McCracken's area of personal expertise, are, of course, not quite amenable to the same kind of solution in this area. But who can deny that there have also been successes—public and private education, the advantages of which Mr. McCracken personally enjoys, being perhaps the most notable?

There is no need to claim that all problems can be solved this way in order to accept the fact that some can, and to distinguish between those that can and those that cannot. The distinction can usually be based on whether or not the basic knowledge or theoretical underpinnings are available. Thus the problem of finding cures for cancer falls into the category of insufficient basic knowledge, as those who promoted the Nixon "crusade" should have known. But there is no lack of fundamental knowledge in the field of energy utilization in general or in solar energy production in particular. There are some hard technical problems, but surely they are no more difficult than those that were faced in the nuclear-weapons and space programs. Fitting solar energy production into desirable use patterns can partially be made a matter of social policy, for which public money will help—or it can be left to the free play of the marketplace, where money is also a driving force.

It is reasonably clear that money is already playing a major role in promoting the use of nuclear energy. All of today's nuclear development (and the word "all" is used advisedly because what is not included is a mere pittance) has been paid for by the government—and we know who pays that! The amounts are astronomical, and if they were added to the unit cost of energy at either the household or the industrial plug, they would shut that plug down very fast. We do have to use a certain amount of nuclear energy to get us over the energy bind we have rather stupidly gotten ourselves into, but to claim that we cannot get out of it because money will not solve the problem is to compound the error.

ELLIOT CHARNEY

Bethesda, Maryland

SAMUEL MCCRACKEN writes:

A single phrase in Elliot Charney's letter illustrates the emotional nature of his disagreement with me: "Mr. McCracken's love affair with nuclear energy." Mr. Charney will not permit me to be simply wrong-headed in my critique of the assault on nuclear power. I must be seen, rather, as pursuing a passionate enthusiasm. Naturally, Mr. Charney, Mr. Chappell, and others do not have "love affairs" with solar energy. They are sober and rational calculators of energy policy.

Mr. Charney seems not to have noticed that I concede an important role for solar energy. I do, however, persist in believing that it cannot provide the major portion of our energy. Mr. Chappell's assertion that a different funding policy would "obviously" produce different results still seems to me to reflect a belief that the only problem in developing solar energy as our main source is a lack of research money.

But there are others. The most important one is the comparatively dilute nature of solar energy. On a clear day, the earth receives approximately one kilowattt per square meter. This means that solar energy can never be the major source where people live togther in densely packed verticality under frequent clouds. That is, for example, in the Northeast United States, where a quarter of our people live. Moreover, no amount of money can ever make solar power as safe as nuclear critics wish, namely, even safer than nuclear power. (And that, as a recent study by the American Medical Association shows, is very safe indeed: approximately 400 times as safe as coal-fired power.)

It is not clear what Mr. Charney means when he asserts that "all of today's nuclear development . . . has been paid for by the government." If he means that most basic research is paid for by government grants, he is right, and what else is new? One would be more impressed by his suggestion that the amounts are "astronomical," and would prove a serious problem if added to electric bills, had he supplied precise figures. The fact is that this year the Department of Energy is spending about $1 billion on all its nuclear-energy programs, and this works out to about 40 cents a month for each American.

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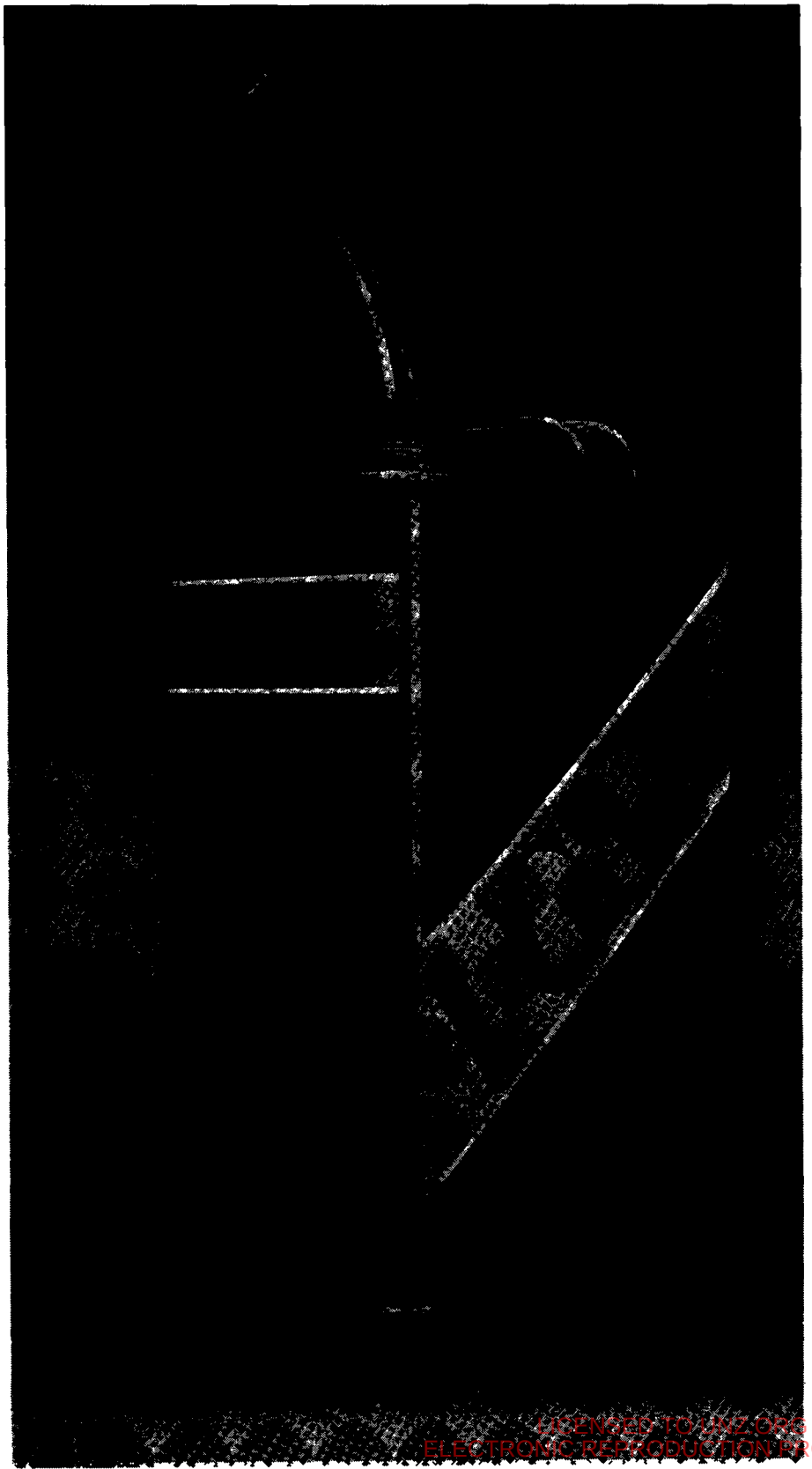

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Behind Camp David

Robert W. Tucker

THE diplomacy of the Middle East conflict has once again taken the world by surprise. At a time when the hopes and expectations aroused by the Sadat peace initiative had reached a very low ebb, when the optimists of the past winter had been transformed into the pessimists of late summer, the results of Camp David startled the world as perhaps no other event had done since the Egyptian President's dramatic trip to Jerusalem.

The expectations entertained of Camp David had differed only in degree of pessimism. At best, the mini-summit was seen as staving off a complete breakdown of the peace negotiations. Even then, it was argued that the result would be largely cosmetic, since the basis for real progress in the negotiations had presumably disappeared (or, as many argued, had never existed in the first place). At worst, Camp David was seen as turning a stalemate into an open rupture, thereby enhancing the prospects of heightened tensions that might well lead to another round of war. Instead, the outcome has been agreement on a separate peace between Egypt and Israel. Though by no means the only result of Camp David, the solid promise of a separate peace between the two principal parties to the Middle East conflict is clearly the most important consequence of the September summit. Once consummated, a separate peace, should it endure, will put an end to this conflict in the form we have known it for thirty years.

Camp David should also put an end to the intense speculation and controversy over the meaning of the Egyptian President's initiative in going to Jerusalem. From this perspective, the meaning of Camp David is the meaning of the Sadat initiative: Camp David is, for all practical purposes, a return to the beginning. It is not, of course, a return in the literal sense. Few returns ever are. The agreements the parties have now reached differ in a number of respects from the agreements they appear initially to have sought. Particularly on the Egyptian side, there is room for argument over whether Sadat got less or more than he had originally bargained for. But in one respect, and it is all important, there appears to be little reason for further debate. In making a separate peace with Israel at Camp David, Sadat realized the principal aim that had prompted his peace initiative from the start.

If Camp David is a return to the beginning, the question persists why the beginning was missed. Why did the efforts of last December and January fail to yield the results that were harvested only in September? The answer cannot simply be left to the historians, though it is only the historians who one day may provide a definitive answer. An understanding of the success of Camp David in achieving Egyptian-Israeli accord depends in substantial measure on understanding why earlier efforts failed. And beyond Camp David, an answer affords a partial basis for estimating whether the results of the September summit will be consolidated and further improved upon in the years ahead.

There is an obvious explanation of why the negotiations of last winter proved abortive. It is that the initial positions taken by Egypt and Israel were simply too divergent to permit reconciliation. Negotiations fail when the parties cannot agree. And when negotiations concern peace or war, it is generally assumed that failure to agree reflects the persistence of profound and, at least for the time, unbridgeable differences. That this has been the prevailing explanation of the case at hand is not surprising. It seems only reasonable. Equally, it seems only reasonable to add that the negotiations of last winter were badly handled, in part because of the very different negotiating styles of the parties and in part because of the numerous misunderstandings that resulted when these different styles suddenly had to reach across formidable political and cultural barriers.

This explanation is unexceptionable as far as it goes. But it does not go very far as an account of the beginning that was missed. Clearly, there is a sense in which it is true to say that the initial failure of the parties to reach agreement reflected

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their divergent positions, whether over the Sinai or over the West Bank and Gaza. But might these differences not have been bridged at the time? With respect to the Sinai, it was generally acknowledged almost from the outset that the issues in contention were capable of compromise. The problems posed by the Palestinians were admittedly of a different order. But here it was apparent that there could be no "solution" in the sense that there could be a solution of the issues raised by a Sinai settlement, and the demand for one would simply lead to deadlock. If a prerequisite for a separate peace between Egypt and Israel was agreement on the disposition of the Palestinians, it would have to be agreement of a particular kind. At best, it could only contain the broad principles on which a final settlement would be based together with initial, though limited, measures of implementation. The principles were apparent. One would have to reiterate or follow the formulation of relevant United Nations resolutions, which would leave the parties quite as free to give their respective interpretations as did the resolutions. A second would have to hold out the promise of self-determination for the Palestinian Arabs. This second principle might be attended by qualifications precluding the emergence of an independent Palestinian state for an indefinite period while also permitting for an indefinite period the continued presence of Israeli security forces in the West Bank and Gaza. Even so, Israel's agreement to the principle of self-determination was indispensable, however delphic the manner in which it might be formulated and whatever the specific conditions attending its implementation. Finally, the matter of principles apart, any agreement on the Palestinians, even one limited to Egypt and Israel, would have to make some provisions for the manner and stages by which the Palestinians would begin a process of political evolution.

There was always a strong case for believing that the position Sadat stated before the Israeli Knesset did not reflect his real position, that he went to Jerusalem to take Egypt out of the conflict, and that, to achieve this end, he was prepared to make a separate peace with Israel if the above conditions were met.* In the light of Camp David, this interpretation of the Sadat initiative appears more persuasive than ever. It is quite true that the conditions for a separate peace were not met in December and January; instead, differences emerged not only with respect to a Sinai settlement but also, and primarily, with respect to a disposition of the Palestinian issue. Yet whether taken separately or as a whole, in retrospect these differences scarcely appear insurmountable. On at least two occasions Egypt and Israel came very close to an agreement in principle over the framework of a comprehensive settlement. Had such an agreement been reached, it is difficult to believe that the parties would have been unable to agree as well on initial measures of implementation. It is equally difficult to believe that had the differences over the Palestinian issue been resolved, the persisting differences over the settlements in the Sinai would have been allowed to block a separate peace.

Nor does it seem plausible to find the failure to reach agreement in the methods by which the early negotiations were conducted. There is no dispute over the point that the negotiations between Egypt and Israel were badly handled in the initial period. On this, both the Egyptians and Israelis concur. Still, diplomatic ineptitude, though always significant, is not the key to the course of the negotiations. At any rate, there was an alternative to the diplomatic framework in the period that followed the Sadat trip, an alternative that was finally employed to full effect only in September.

These considerations suggest that the explanation of why the beginning was missed must focus very largely on the role and position of the United States. If it is the case that the success registered at Camp David cannot be understood without an appreciation of the critical role played by this country, a point on which virtually all observers appear to agree, there seems to be no valid reason for exonerating the Carter administration from substantial responsibility for the earlier failure. Unless, that is, it can be shown that what was finally done in September could not have been done in the preceding December. Yet the administration might have given Sadat the support in December that it finally gave him in September, support without which it was impossible for him to conclude a separate peace. More generally, it might have intervened during the early stage of the negotiations in roughly the manner it finally did at Camp David. The failure to have done so reflected the Carter administration's disapproval of the strategy of a separate peace and its continued obsession with the goal of a comprehensive settlement. Although the Sadat initiative was a political earthquake that had suddenly altered the Middle East landscape, the administration persisted in acting as though little had happened to change the basic assumptions of policy.

II

In the long months that followed the breakdown of negotiations in January, Washington gave little sign of any major change in policy. Throughout the winter and spring the major American effort was directed to Jerusalem. At issue in the increasingly acrimonious exchanges between the two countries was the American insistence that the Israeli government go beyond the Begin plan of December as a condition for the renewal of negotiations. The Begin plan for the West Bank and Gaza had proposed the abolition of military government in the areas and, in its place, the establishment of administrative autonomy for the residents who would elect an admin-

*See my article, "The Middle East: For a Separate Peace," COMMENTARY, March 1978.

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istrative council. Save for security and public order, functions of local government would be placed under the control of the council. Although subject to review after a period of five years, when residents would be accorded the option of choosing between Israeli and Jordanian citizenship, the plan contained no commitment to further change in the status of the territories. Instead, in the words of the plan, Israel stood by "its right and its claim to sovereignty to Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza district," while proposing that, since other claims existed, "for the sake of the agreement and the peace, . . . the question of sovereignty be left open."

These features of the Begin plan must be kept in mind when considering the agreement reached at Camp David. At the time the plan was put forth, Washington was not on record as objecting to the provision respecting the question of sovereignty. Nor did it insist that the Israeli government indicate what further steps it was prepared to commit itself to in the West Bank and Gaza after the initial five-year period. It was only after the interested Arab states had rejected the plan that the Carter administration also found the proposal inadequate as a basis for negotiation (though it is only fair to add that Washington had never been happy with the Begin plan and at the time it was put forth had sought to persuade the Israeli Prime Minister to defer its presentation). The Begin government was subsequently pressed to reconcile its position on sovereignty with UN Security Council Resolution 242, which in Washington's view required the abandonment of any Israeli claims to sovereignty over the areas, and to be more forthcoming—and specific—on the future status of the territories and the inhabitants once the five-year period had elapsed. In the absence of renewal of negotiations with Egypt, the Israeli government refused to do either.

Did the administration's position not only encourage but perhaps even force Sadat to harden his position? Certainly the stance taken by Washington did not, and could not, serve to moderate the Egyptian price for an agreement. Sadat could scarcely afford to be seen as asking for less than Washington was asking in the name of a comprehensive settlement. Thus the apparent result of a policy of pressuring Israel into making further concessions on the Palestinian issue was to lead to a hardening of the Egyptian position on the West Bank and Gaza.

At the same time, the Carter administration remained reluctant to assure Sadat that it was prepared to protect him from the consequences of failure should the Begin government refuse to give way to American pressure. Earlier, Washington had refused to underwrite Sadat's initiative and had thus exposed his vulnerability to an Arab world that ranged from the skeptical to the openly hostile. Having once forced him to harden his terms, thereby markedly diminishing the prospects of an agreement with Israel, Washington still refused to commit itself to the protection of Sadat.

In the absence of such a commitment, the Egyptian President found himself in a position that must have seemed even worse than the position that had initially prompted him to go to Jerusalem. The failure of his policy, quite apart from being a personal humiliation, would leave him more isolated and vulnerable than ever. The improved American relationship, assuming that it would persist, could not compensate for the dangers likely to ensue. Nor did Sadat have a viable policy alternative. Certainly he could not seriously have considered another round of war, a war in which the glory of 1973 might well be replaced by the shame experienced in earlier conflicts.

Sadat could hardly have missed the bitter irony of the predicament in which he was being increasingly placed by his American patron. It accounts for his growing sense of frustration. It also accounts for his growing insistence that America must not only be a mediator but a "full partner" in the negotiations. That insistence cannot simply be seen as an attempt to use Washington as a means of pressuring the Israelis into further concessions. Though this was clearly one purpose, another was to get Washington to commit itself to full support of a separate peace and to do so whatever the agreement reached by Egypt and Israel on the West Bank and Gaza. It may well be that the second purpose was all along the more important one for Sadat. The two were, in any event, never really contradictory, as the negotiations at Camp David were to demonstrate. Nor does the achievement of a separate peace render obsolete the strategy of pursuing both. Sadat may be expected to continue the attempt to transmit pressure to Israel through the Americans. Even so, the critical importance of Washington's role as a "full partner" to the peace settlement will also remain for a considerable period to come one of supporting Sadat on his Arab flank.

THE key, then, was the change in American policy. What led the Carter administration to this change? What prompted Washington to abandon, in substance if not in form, its commitment to a comprehensive settlement and to accept the strategy of a separate peace as a goal desirable in itself, though one that also provides an indispensable first step toward achieving a more comprehensive settlement? Had the administration been in the process of changing its policy for some time?

On one post-Camp David account, a move away from the Geneva conference format and, more significantly, the comprehensive approach, had begun almost in the immediate wake of the Sadat trip to Jerusalem. It was reflected in the Brzezinski concept of "concentric circles," the first circle providing for strong support of the Sadat initiative and for a separate Egyptian-Israeli agreement. If this account is true, seldom has a policy been so well disguised. Far more plausible is the version

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that a change in policy occurred in the course of the spring and summer, and that it resulted from the belated realization that the old policy simply was not working. The Begin government could be pushed only so far by Washington. Beyond a point that was reasonably well defined by late spring, it would not yield. Nor could it be unseated.

Moreover, the attempt to exact greater concessions from Jerusalem was not improving Sadat's position. Having staked very nearly all on his initiative, he had little to show for it apart from the improved American relationship, and that was not enough. A complete breakdown of negotiations, in Washington's view, would, at the least, heighten tensions considerably and, at worst, set the stage for another round of war. It was also likely to present the Soviet Union with new opportunities. The position the United States had gained in the Middle East since the 1973 war had not gone without Russian challenge. In the Red Sea region, Moscow had made, and was continuing to make, a serious effort to expand its influence. Whether this effort might be contained was not unrelated to the outcome of the negotiations between Egypt and Israel. No one could say with any real assurance what would happen should Sadat's initiative end in open failure. But failure might well lead once again to a very fluid and possibly even to an uncontrollable situation. If so, who could tell what the Russians might be tempted to do and, indeed, perhaps succeed in doing?

These were, in brief, the considerations that presumably led the Carter administration to change its policy. There was yet another, though it does not belong to the realm of high policy. Mr. Carter badly needed a success in order to reverse an already strong, though still growing, public conviction that he was incompetent. By the summer of 1978, talk of a one-term President no longer seemed to be idle speculation but represented a very solid prospect. A prospect like this can, and very possibly did, do wonders to concentrate the presidential mind. If so, the President had at hand all the evidence he needed, and more, to conclude that his Middle East policy was headed for disaster. He also had at hand more than a little evidence for concluding that a change in policy, one which pushed first and foremost for a separate peace, might very well succeed. If Sadat had no really credible alternative to his initiative, and if the Begin government still very much wanted to take Egypt out of the conflict, the basis for an agreement needed only a little give by the two parties. This might be accomplished by the direct hand of the President at a summit conference, a conference that if it were to succeed would also require a presidential commitment to the parties—and particularly to Egypt—which Carter had previously been unwilling to make.

Thus the stage for Camp David was set. The decision to call a summit and to place the President's prestige on the line as never before was not a large gamble—and clearly not a desperate gamble. Though no certainty could be attached to the outcome, the architects of the summit knew it had a reasonable chance of success, else they would not have taken this route. And as between a reasonable chance of success and the near certainty of failure, the instinct for political survival does not permit of much doubt and hesitation.

THERE is no gainsaying the plausibility, even the persuasiveness, of this account. A lingering doubt persists, however, whether it is also true. The commitment to the previous policy had been quite strong. Though it had run into a dead end, there was no outward indication the administration was ready to abandon it. The decision to go to the summit might simply have been born of the conviction that something had to be done to break the deadlock, though what this something was might also have remained unclear until the last moment. The gloom that marked Washington officialdom before the summit might of course have been as feigned as the surprised delight at the results. If so, it was a marvelous and altogether unusual performance for this or any administration. The same must be said of the remarks by key American officials, made in the immediate aftermath of the conference, that they had been quite unprepard for the parties to go the route of a separate peace. On the other hand, they may have been telling the truth in that they had failed to foresee this result not only because they had failed to appreciate that the basis for a separate peace was already largely laid out but because the American strategy for the conference was not to push for a separate peace, let alone to make such a peace its first objective. If so, it was only after the American delegation discovered that the materials for a separate Egyptian-Israeli agreement were near at hand, and that, once realized, they would open the way to a broader agreement, that a clear change in policy occurred.

If the latter account is substantially accurate, it suggests that the administration stumbled into its success and that the results of Camp David were, in the first place, plain luck. To say this is not to detract from the American accomplishment at Camp David and, particularly, the efforts of the President. Even with the basis for an agreement already apparent, the Americans played, and had to play, a vital role if the negotiations were to be successfully consummated. Given complete American commitment to the outcome, the parties could make concessions which otherwise, as experience had shown, would have proven very difficult and perhaps impossible. The Americans finally played the role that from the start had been theirs for the asking, though a role which until Camp David they had neither asked for nor been willing to accept. Nor does it matter that one reason this role was finally undertaken was the President's need for a striking foreign-policy success to restore a badly tarnished political image. What does matter is Carter's ability to appreciate the meaning of his

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victory and to act consistently on it in the period ahead.

III

IT IS not a mere raking over of old coals to insist that Camp David is, for the most part, a return to the beginning. Although concessions were made at the September conference that the parties were unwilling to make nine months earlier, what is striking is the similarity between the Camp David agreements and the initial—as distinguished from the declaratory—positions of Israel and Egypt. In the Sinai, the changes made in earlier positions were almost all in the form of Israeli concessions. These changes, it is true, were not insignificant. In the case of the airfields and Sharm-el-Sheikh, Israel has surrendered strategic assets which cannot adequately be compensated for either by the Egyptian promise not to make military use of the abandoned air bases or by the American promise to help Israel build two air bases in the Negev. The dramatic constriction of usable airspace that the Sinai agreement imposes will in itself raise considerable problems for Israeli military planners. In the Western world these problems have commonly gone unappreciated, just as the problems arising from the abandonment of the settlements have been viewed with little understanding or sympathy. As the strategic functions served by the settlements have been largely dismissed, the political and psychological significance of abandoning settlements has been met with indifference, if not with hostility. Even so, this does not alter the fact that in the light of Israel's history of state-building, the abandonment of settlements must touch on one of the most sensitive of nerves. When to these considerations is added the unavoidable suspicion that a government which abandons settlements anywhere may, whatever its protestations to the contrary, abandon them everywhere—that what is done in the Sinai may also be done in the West Bank—the difficulties attending the decision made by the Begin government should be apparent. After all, it was Begin who told the Knesset last December that in any treaty with Egypt "Israeli settlements will remain where they are. . . . They will be defended by an Israeli military force." If nine months later the Israeli Prime Minister could argue before the Knesset that, for the sake of peace with Egypt, the Sinai settlements must be removed, how can the prospect be ruled out that one day he or his successor will insist that for the sake of peace the West Bank settlements must also be removed?

At issue here, however, is not so much the significance of the concession Israel made in the Sinai as whether these concessions were possible only in September and not in the preceding December or January. It is difficult to believe that they could not have been made before. No doubt, the Begin government was from the start extremely loath to give up the Sinai settlements.* Still, there is a vast difference between saying this and saying that the Israeli Prime Minister had determined to hold the settlements even at the price of a separate peace with Egypt. And almost from the outset, there was little question that this would indeed be the price for holding the Sinai settlements. Begin's refusal to yield them in December and January was not the expression of an unalterable position, else it is difficult to understand his yielding them in September. Instead, his refusal may be understood as an attempt to use the settlements issue in order to moderate what Jerusalem saw, rightly or wrongly, as a rising Egyptian price on the West Bank.

WHAT may be said of the Camp David framework for a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel may equally be said of the broader agreement on the framework of peace in the Middle East. The latter agreement consists essentially of two parts: a statement of the general principles that are to provide the basis for a comprehensive settlement and a set of provisions that outline the manner and stages for dealing with the West Bank and Gaza. Not unexpectedly, UN Security Council Resolution 242 is to provide the "agreed basis" for a peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict. Also not unexpectedly, the general principles contained in the document, if taken at all seriously, hold out the promise of self-determination for the Palestinian people. In doing so, they follow almost verbatim the statement of general principles to govern the resolution of the Palestinian problem agreed to by Presidents Sadat and Carter at Aswan in January. The Aswan declaration stipulated, and the Camp David framework repeats, that "there must be a resolution of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects," that such a resolution "must recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people," and that it must enable the Palestinians "to participate in the determination of their own future."

It may be argued that the Camp David framework clearly differs in at least one important respect from any declaration of principles Israel was prepared to accept last winter, and this is in the central position given to Resolution 242 as a basis for negotiating a final settlement of the West Bank and Gaza. But the significance of 242 in relation to the West Bank and Gaza must largely be seen in relation to claims of the Begin government to sovereignty over these areas. That these claims are not advanced in the Camp David document does not mean the Begin government has

*This position enjoyed a very broad consensus in Israel. The preceding Labor government had taken a similar position on the sacrosanct character of the Sinai settlements. It is also worth recalling that in the unofficial plan of its Foreign Minister, Yigal Allon, a plan the Rabin government took care to separate itself from, the terms of a peace treaty with Egypt would have offered less than Begin initially offered Sadat. With respect to the Sinai settlements, there was no difference of view.

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abandoned them. What it does mean is that Begin agreed not to press such claims at Camp David, and, in effect, to leave the issue of sovereignty open. Despite all the talk that this represents a new departure for Jerusalem, such is in fact not the case. As earlier noted, the Begin plan of last December proposed that for the sake of agreement and peace the question of sovereignty be left open. In this respect, then, the difference between December and September is only that what was made explicit then—and served no doubt as an irritant —is left implicit now.

More significant than the very modest movement on the sovereignty issue is the Israeli acceptance of the Aswan principles. Yet here as well the change from last winter is easily exaggerated. It is necessary to recall that first at Ismailia in December and then at Jerusalem in January, Egypt and Israel were very close to an agreement on a declaration of principles. From what we know of these near-misses, they did not duplicate the Aswan formulation. In many respects, however, their substance seems not to have been very dissimilar. Moreover, it is a matter of record that the Begin government in effect accepted most of the Aswan formulation in the course of the winter. It appeared to draw the line, and then not without some ambiguity, only at the principle that the Palestinian problem must be resolved "in all its aspects." But this was scarcely an uncrossable line and agreeing to its inclusion in the Camp David accord represented no very momentous shift in the Israeli position.

These remarks ought not to be construed as implying that the agreement on principles reached at Camp David is itself without importance, only that a not very different agreement was within reach much earlier. The principles, it is true, are subject to varying interpretations. But this is not to say that they have no meaning. Menachem Begin is an example par excellence of the man who believes that words change reality. He may persuade himself that in the present case this will not be so; nevertheless he has agreed to principles which, though admittedly vague, hold out, and will be seen as holding out, the eventual promise of self-determination for the Palestinians.

This promise is implicit as well in the manner and stages by which negotiations on the Palestinian problem are to proceed according to the Camp David framework. But then the same promise was also implicit in the much criticized Begin plan of last December. What the Camp David agreement has done is to take the Begin plan, strip it of those provisions that served little purpose other than to arouse Arab sensibilities,* grant a greater measure of local autonomy to the Palestinians during a five-year transitional period,† and, most importantly, provide for a more explicit, while at the same time a more open-ended, process by which the final status of the West Bank and Gaza may be sought. Put in different terms, the Camp David framework, in contrast to the Begin plan, is much less concerned with the definition of rights and much more concerned with the elaboration of process. One might say that the Camp David agreement has taken the Begin plan, loosened it up, added to it the Aswan principles, and given those principles a procedural meaning that they otherwise lacked when standing alone.

Above all, it is the emphasis on process that marks the Camp David framework. The Begin plan did not altogether ignore this vital element. Still, in the earlier proposal, recognition of the significance and, indeed, of the centrality of a process that still leaves the future quite open was kept to a minimum. At the time, this was seen by many observers, including Israelis, as a major defect. In the September agreement this defect has been largely remedied. A close reading of the framework relating to the West Bank and Gaza prompts the conclusion that it is mainly process. It is with the provision for the progression of stages that the framework is principally concerned rather than with the substantive results emerging from each stage.

There are, to be sure, the general principles that are to govern negotiations at any stage. There are also certain substantive results that must emerge from the negotiating process. Thus the transitional arrangements, to extend for a period not exceeding five years, must provide for the full autonomy of the inhabitants. So, too, the creation of a self-governing authority for the West Bank and Gaza with defined powers and responsibilities is to be attended by a general withdrawal of Israeli armed forces and the redeployment of those remaining forces into specified security locations. But these, and still other, provisions are no more than roughly indicative of the results to which the negotiating process may lead. They are almost entirely applicable to the transitional period. Beyond this period there is scarcely any indication at all, the general

* The provision on sovereignty apart, these dealt with the Palestinian option of choosing either Israeli or Jordanian citizenship, the right of residents of Israel to acquire land and settle in the West Bank and Gaza (a right reciprocally granted to Arab residents of these territories who chose to become Israeli citizens), and the assurance of freedom of movement and of economic activity to residents of Israel and the territories. None of these provisions appears in the Camp David agreement. At the same time, their absence cannot be taken as evidence of their relinquishment by Israel. In each case, Israel has evidently reserved its claimed rights, something it might also have done in presenting the Begin plan. In the Camp David agreement, these claimed rights are effectively reserved for the time being by virtue of a process almost every step of which requires Israeli concurrence. The same method of reservation might just as well have been employed in the Begin plan.

†In the Begin plan the functions of security and public order are maintained as Israeli responsibilities. The Camp David agreement, on the other hand, provides for "full autonomy" for the West Bank and Gaza inhabitants and the withdrawal of Israeli military government and civilian administration as soon as a self-governing authority has been elected by the inhabitants to replace the military government.

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principles apart, of what is expected to emerge in the way of a permanent regime for the West Bank and Gaza. All that is stipulated is that as soon as possible, though no later than the third year after the beginning of the transition period, "negotiations will take place to determine the final status of the West Bank and Gaza, and its relationship with its neighbors," and that "these negotiations will be conducted among Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and the elected representatives of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza." The parties are to reach a solution that "recognizes the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and their just requirements." But they are also enjoined "to take all necessary measures . . . and provisions . . . to assure the security of Israel and its neighbors." *Are these stipulations reconcilable?* The framework provides no apparent answer apart from the negotiating process itself—and time.

It is this emphasis on process to which critics of the Camp David framework mainly take objection. The inadequacy of the agreement on the West Bank and Gaza, the criticism runs, must be found precisely in the fact that it is little more than an agreement on process. For that process to work satisfactorily, however, there must be a substantial measure of assurance that the parties will use it reasonably and in good faith. This in turn requires a broad area of agreement on the ends to which the process will lead. Yet it is precisely the absence of such agreement that led to the emphasis on the process for achieving a final settlement rather than on the substantive terms of settlement. In the absence of agreement on ends, it is argued, process, particularly one that reserves a right of veto to the principal parties, merely serves to cover over the persistence of fundamental disagreements while providing an instrument to sustain the status quo.

The criticism is not without some merit. It is transparently clear that the emphasis on process in the Camp David framework largely reflects the deep and persistent disagreements on the disposition of the Palestinian problem. This being the case, the framework embodies the paradox characteristic of all such agreements in conflicts. Agreement cannot be obtained save by concentrating on process and by setting difficult issues aside or dealing with them in ambiguous fashion. Yet once obtained, no agreement on process, however ingenious, can be made to work unless the parties to it eventually demonstrate a willingness to accept outcomes they had previously been unwilling to accept.

The weakness of this criticism, on the other hand, is that there was no viable alternative to the emphasis on process characterizing the Camp David framework—at least, there was no viable alternative that held out the prospect of agreement. Moreover, the process itself will place a considerable political onus on the party which does not appear to apply it reasonably and in good faith. And since it is Israel that by failing to act in good faith would presumably stand the most to gain, it is upon Israel that this onus must principally rest. Given the circumstances, perhaps there was no way to avoid this asymmetry. Even so, it is clearly there, and critics are either obtuse or disingenuous in refusing to acknowledge it. The process established at Camp David will not be without substantive outcome.

IV

In the aftermath of Camp David it has been rather fashionable to pass over the matter of relative gain and loss. The euphoria that has followed the summit has somehow seemed to make asking the eternal question of politics an act of bad taste. To its supporters, the outcome of the conference was a gain for all parties. This assessment is obviously not shared by those, particularly in the Arab world, who have received the summit results with suspicion or hostility. But even if the outcome of Camp David is accepted as a gain for all parties, including the disaffected, there is still the question of who gained most—just as there is the corollary question of who has assumed the greatest risks. These questions are not of a peripheral character. In considering the meaning of Camp David, they are quite central.

What has Sadat gained by the Camp David agreements? One gain, at least, will not be disputed. The return of the Sinai without any encumbrances is no small triumph. So far as Egyptian territory is concerned, the hero of the 1973 war has successfully reclaimed the land lost by his predecessor.

If Sadat did not obtain all that he intended to get by going to Jerusalem, he came very close to doing so. At least, he came very close to obtaining all that he might reasonably have expected in undertaking his peace initiative. Indeed, it may well be argued that he got a good deal more than he might reasonably have expected in that he succeeded, with American help, in pushing a Palestinian solution beyond agreement simply on a set of principles. Sadat may have been led to expect in the course of the past year that, again with American help, he could do even better for the Palestinians. In fact, what he did do was the most that could be done. Nor could the Egyptian President have assumed that he would not have to pay a price in breaking away from his Arab brothers and making his peace. Yet how considerable was the price? In relation to the Arab world, it does not appear great. Without Egypt, the rest of this world has no real center of political gravity to give its efforts what modest cohesiveness they formerly possessed. There is no likely successor to Egypt—not Syria and not even Saudi Arabia. A serious blow would be struck at Egyptian interests were Saudi Arabia to withdraw its financial support of Cairo. But this it cannot do without incurring risks. The Saudis may dislike Sadat's policy, but they can scarcely afford to respond effectively without bringing even greater risks upon themselves.

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A more serious critique of Sadat's policy and the price he must incur by pursuing it argues that the logic of this policy is to make of Egypt an American—and indirectly an Israeli—satellite. In making his separate peace, Sadat has forfeited on this view his former freedom of action. It is certainly true that Sadat is now tightly tied to Washington, and that this dependent relationship must have certain consequences for future Egyptian-Israeli relations. But if this is the price that the present policy entails, no purpose is served by juxtaposing it with a largely imaginary former freedom of action. Cairo's independence of action was being steadily eroded in any case, whether because of its internal difficulties or because of an Arab bloc—supported by the Soviet Union—it could not control. This had been precisely Sadat's difficulty in the period leading to his initiative. It led to his being increasingly caught between the Americans and Israelis on one side and a Syrian-Palestinian-Soviet combination on the other. In breaking out of this position, he has not further limited his independence of action. The difference is that whereas his constrained position formerly offered only risks and no apparent gains, now it holds out the prospect of some distinct gains.

EVEN if Sadat has gained, and rather substantially so, from the results to which his initiative has finally led, can the same be said of the Palestinians? Were the Palestinians forced to pay the price for an Egyptian-Israeli peace? It is significant that even among many supporters of the Camp David agreements, let alone opponents, the view is entertained that the Palestinians did have to pay the real price for an agreement between Egypt and Israel. Put less delicately, Sadat is seen as having sacrificed Palestinian interests in order to obtain a separate peace. And though the sacrifice may be considered necessary, it is still accepted by many with a sense of unease.

The view that the Palestinians paid the chief price for Camp David and that Sadat imposed this price on them, assumes that a very different solution of the West Bank and Gaza, one far more favorable to Palestinian interests, was possible. But this assumption will not bear serious examination. There was no way by which Sadat could have obtained better terms for the Palestinians. Had he never undertaken his peace initiative, the Palestinians would be in the same position today that they were in a year ago. That position could have been substantially altered only through a war against Israel led and won primarily by Egypt. There was no prospect that Egypt could have succeeded in such an enterprise, even had the willingness been there. In the absence of war, yet in the absence of a move toward reconciliation with Israel, Sadat was of little use to the Palestinians. It is nonsense to believe that he has now sacrificed Palestinian interests. Indeed, he has done more for those interests than most close observers of the Middle East would have deemed possible a year ago.

The role and responsibility of Sadat apart, the view that the Palestinians were the main losers at Camp David is persuasive only if the immediate results of the summit are measured by the yardstick of an independent Palestinian state. What is the point, however, of that view and of the judgment to which it leads? An independent state was not something the Palestinians had to lose, save in the sense that one may be said to lose a hope or a vision. Nothing was denied to them at Camp David that they had once enjoyed in the past. Nor was anything denied to them that they might have achieved by other means had it not been for the presumed collusion of the Camp David parties. Finally, is it indeed the case that the Palestinians have now lost their hope of an independent state? If so, then they have almost surely misread the significance of the agreement on the West Bank and Gaza. For the Camp David framework has provided not only the broad justification of a Palestinian state but the mechanism for achieving that end. The Palestinians have only to make intelligent use of what has now been conceded them in all but name.

THE Israelis, in turn, have paid a very substantial price for the Camp David agreements, the prevailing and contrary judgment notwithstanding. That price cannot be calculated simply or even primarily in terms of the strategic assets, significant in themselves, they must now surrender in the Sinai. In time, the undertakings made with respect to the West Bank and Gaza are likely to prove far more significant. The often vague and ambiguous character of those commitments, when taken together with the need to obtain the concurrence of the parties at each stage of their implementation, have prompted the conclusion that the Israelis have, in fact, committed themselves to very little and that the process they have agreed to at Camp David is one they can always control. The Israeli government has encouraged this conclusion by the statements its leaders have made in the period following the summit. Above all, the government has emphasized that the Camp David framework will not and cannot be used to support the creation of a Palestinian state. In his defense of the summit accords, Prime Minister Begin assured the Knesset that "there is and will not be under any conditions or in any circumstances a Palestinian state."

This assurance of Mr. Begin, however, no longer carries any real conviction. The Israelis can influence the political evolution of the Palestinians, but they cannot control this evolution in the sense the Prime Minister evidently intended to convey. Once the Palestinians are provided full autonomy and Israeli forces are confined to specified locations in the West Bank and Gaza, a process will have begun that is bound to have a dynamism and momentum of its own. Even in the transitional period, the elected self-governing authority in these territories is to have, defense and foreign affairs apart, the

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substantial attributes and functions of a government. Should it behave at all in the manner such "authorities" have behaved in the past, it may be expected to push even within the immediate period ahead for an expansion of powers. Its leadership, moreover, cannot be determined by the Israeli government if it is to enjoy any degree of confidence of the inhabitants. Within broad limits, Jerusalem may be expected to attempt to exercise a veto over the kind of political elite to emerge within the West Bank and Gaza. Still the limits are likely to permit elements indirectly representative of, or acceptable to, the PLO. There are any number of cases in this century in which a people has achieved political independence in circumstances less promising than those now accorded the Palestinians.

This is the price that Israel paid to get a peace with Egypt. In the circumstances, it was probably the best price Israel could have expected to pay in order to remove Egypt from the thirty-year conflict. Still, it is high in terms of the risks the Israelis are required to take. Even in the short run, and almost certainly in the long run, these risks are greater than the ones incurred by Egypt.

V

WILL the results of Camp David prove lasting? In the speculation that has followed the summit, this question has been considered largely in terms of the reaction of other Arab states, particularly the Saudis and the Jordanians. But the fate of the agreements will not be determined in the first place by these states. It will be determined above all by America. If this country remains committed to the agreements, in fact as well as in words, then whatever the reservations and even the opposition of others, the prospects are good that they will prove durable. For the degree of our commitment will surely influence the position Saudi Arabia and Jordan ultimately take.

Thus, the real question raised by speculation over the future of the summit agreements is whether the change in American policy that produced the success at Camp David will prove lasting. The significance of this change is not adequately conveyed simply by characterizing it as a shift from a policy of directly seeking a comprehensive settlement to one of promoting a separate peace in the hope, and even the reasonable expectation, that out of such a peace a comprehensive settlement will emerge in time. The old policy of directly seeking a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict reflected more than an obsessive ambition to achieve the unachievable. At root, it betrayed an unwillingness to commit American influence and power.

It was of course recognized that even a comprehensive settlement would require *some* commitment of American influence and power, and not least of all in order to bring Israel to terms. Still, there was a considerable difference between the kind of American commitment required by a comprehensive settlement and the kind required by a separate peace. The policy of directly pursuing a comprehensive settlement did not simply reflect the conviction that a separate peace would eventually unravel—whether as a result of the tensions it would create between an exposed Egypt and other Arab states, or by virtue of the extremism it would breed among the Palestinians—or that it would facilitate a Soviet reentry in force into the Middle East. At a deeper level the opposition to a separate peace expressed the unwillingness to employ American power to forestall or, if necessary, to counter these consequences, along with the fear of having to counter a substantial portion of the Arab world, including the states that supply America with one-fourth of its imported oil.

Only the future will tell whether the administration has learned a lesson from Camp David that will endure. In the period immediately following the summit there have been several signs that this lesson has not been accepted throughout the administration, that at least a significant part of the bureaucracy remains opposed to the shift in policy, and that it will use its influence to move for a return to the previous course. Intimations of second thoughts have been expressed even at the presidential level, as witnessed by Carter's momentary effort to "improve" upon the results of Camp David by pressing on those issues the parties left in abeyance because their respective positions were too divergent to permit compromise. There was no useful purpose served in raising these issues almost before the ink had dried on the agreement. What is necessary now is consummation of the peace agreement between Egypt and Israel and the initiation of negotiations on the means for establishing the elected self-governing authorities in the West Bank and Gaza. Neither step is facilitated by reminding the parties of what, in the American view, they have yet to do if the Middle East conflict is one day to be settled. The only purpose that is served by this tactic is to create doubt over the American commitment to the course we appear to have accepted at Camp David.

These presidential gestures may be no more than the reflexes of a habit that is not easily unlearned. The persisting bureaucratic opposition to the shift registered at Camp David may slowly atrophy. If this should prove to be the case, the summit conference may well stand out as the end of a policy predicated on the assumption that American power can play no more than a modest and largely passive role, whether in the Middle East or elsewhere in the world.

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The Attack on the Professions

Nathan Glazer

PROFESSIONALISM, professionalization, and the professions are increasingly central to any grasp of modern societies, yet persistently elude proper understanding. On the one hand, the professions are old, and considerably antedate modern society, with its scientific base, its huge production of commodities, its mass education, and its complex division of labor—after all, theology, medicine, and law were already solidly established as professions requiring specialized training in the medieval universities. On the other hand, professional organization seems to be distinctively characteristic of modern societies. More and more occupations are organized as professions, and new occupations claiming to be professions regularly come into being. No definition, it seems, can possibly cover all these developments. Professions range from those most of us could accept as being based on scientific and specialized knowledge, demanding long training, to those that raise many questions as to whether they are truly "professions." As they multiply, so do our doubts about them. We doubt that they are based on as much specialized knowledge as they claim to be; we doubt that they require as much training as they claim to; we suspect that their insistence on formal degrees and their efforts to bar the unqualified smack more of restrictive trade-union practice than of any altruistic concern for their clients or the public.

These suspicions are strongest when it comes to the newer professions—the ones that not too long ago were simply considered occupations, and whose claim to any sort of special scientific or technical knowledge seems dubious. Education and social work (and their various sub-specialties) fall into this category, along with child-care and care of the mentally ill, the retarded, and the elderly. All these were turned (or are in the process of being turned) into professions only recently, yet the trappings of professionalism are already securely in place: specialized courses of study in institutions of higher education; the professional associations limited to degree-holders; the competitive examinations and certification procedures under state auspices. (Not long ago, Robert Wood, a former professor of political science at MIT, a former secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and a former president of the University of Massachusetts, required a special exemption to become superintendent of schools in Boston—he did not have the proper course in education and administration.)

But the current attack on the professions, which derives in part from the consumer-advocacy movement, is also aimed at the older professions like law and medicine (theology, in our secular society, is safe because it is no longer important). They are criticized for monopolizing the services they perform, charging too much for them, exaggerating the degree of specialized knowledge they possess, and the length of time necessary to acquire it. Much of what they do, the argument continues, we could do ourselves, if the states and professional associations would dismantle their regulatory machinery, and allow those without the requisite credentials to perform these services for themselves if they want to, and for anyone else willing to accept them.

This argument has something to recommend it. A closer examination of the claims of the professions, their technical qualifications, and the objectives they pursue is certainly warranted, as is raising the question of whether achieving these objectives necessarily involves a lengthy period of education and specialized training. Every occupation tries to enhance its own prestige, and the impulse to emphasize the importance of what one does, to insist that it requires more than ordinary capacities and application, and to try to keep the doors closed to outsiders is only human. Yet there are also social objectives to be considered here, and we are entitled to ask whether specialized training and professional qualifications bolstered by the state are a better way to achieve them than fair and open competition in the marketplace.

IF ONE major source of criticism of the professions has been consumer advocacy—the cry, "We can do it for ourselves"—another has been the new revisionist history of social institutions. The asylum, the school, the university, the jail, the social-service organization have all

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come under sharp examination by young historians in recent years, and their efforts have substantially revised the functional, and rather benign, explanation of how these institutions came about. Over and over again we have been hearing that the schools were not intended primarily to educate, the jails were not intended to protect the community from crime, the social-service agencies were not intended to help families with problems. Rather, all these institutions, to a lesser or greater extent, manipulated those in their charge, stripped immigrants of their culture, shaped a docile working class, and imposed alien middle-class values.

Certainly we have learned a great deal from this new history, and what we have learned has raised many questions about the professions. Thus, from Steven L. Schlossman's scholarly and thoughtful study of the early treatment of juvenile delinquency in America,* we learn that our enlightened, progressive approach to this problem—which involves housing children in institutions modeled as far as possible on the family—actually dates back to the early 19th century. In those days, children's institutions were called Houses of Refuge or Reform, industrial schools, or reformatories, and none of these terms had the associations they now call up. They started out with the brightest of hopes as enlightened sanctuaries, only to degenerate into jails whose outrageous conditions led to recurrent explosions of public outrage. We learn too from Schlossman's book that these earlier efforts to reform the treatment of the delinquent child were based, just like our own, on scientific tenets, though admittedly the science of that day could well have included phrenology. Still, since our own approach in these matters is not so different from the ones he is describing, Schlossman's book inevitably raises the question of whether our own efforts to understand delinquency scientifically stand any better chance of success. If those earlier experts (they were not called professionals then) were so wrong about the efficacy of such things as family-style confinement centers, juvenile courts, etc., why should we do any better? Inevitably, the mood of skeptical caution induced by Schlossman's study, and other studies of early reform institutions, carries over to influence our attitude toward our own present-day professionals and their claims.

Schlossman's study is an example of the better kind of revisionist history. But unfortunately a good part of this history, influenced by Marxism, consists of a massive and undiscriminating criticism of the professions in which specific questions are all but lost in a flood of total, yet obscure, denunciation. It is one thing to point out the inevitable limitations of understanding of the professions, to criticize exaggerated claims, and to call attention to motives of self-interest. It is quite another to interpret professionalism as such as simply an example or tool of class domination, as both Burton Bledstein and David Noble do, the first in his study of higher education in America, and the second in his account of how the profession of scientific engineering was shaped by the needs of corporate capitalism.† Both books are based on a great deal of research (Noble in particular opens up obscure sources) and both are very informative, but in a framework of interpretation so distorted that even a reader like myself, not qualified to fault their research, can easily see gaping holes in their efforts to construct an argument on the basis of that research.

Bledstein devotes much of his book to the rise of the American university, whose purpose, as he sees it, was to insure dominance for the children of the middle class by providing them with professions. He focuses on the group of men who created the modern American university in the latter part of the 19th century—Charles W. Eliot of Harvard, Daniel Coit Gilman of Johns Hopkins, Andrew Dickson White of Cornell, James B. Angell of Michigan—to tell a story that has already been told once (and with great authority and insight) by Laurence Veysey in his masterful *The Emergence of the American University*. But what a different version we get in Bledstein! What escapes almost completely from his account is the effort of these men, in varying degree, to raise the level of scholarship of the American university, and to find means of service, of connecting it to the life of the ongoing society. That they also created and led institutions and did what they had to do to expand them and establish them on firm foundations, and to attract support and students, goes without saying. But this is almost all one sees in Bledstein. One would not suspect that the early university presidents also spent a good deal of time in such pursuits as looking for scholars who would raise the reputation of their institutions, even though they were of little practical use when it came to such things as raising money or attracting undergraduate students.

BLEDSTEIN's thesis is that "By and large, the American university came into existence to serve and promote professional authority in American society. More than in any Western country in the last century, the development of higher education in America made possible a social faith in merit, competence, discipline, and control that were basic to accepted conceptions of achievement and success." He adds further that ". . . the culture of professionalism

**Love and the American Delinquent: The Theory of "Progressive" Juvenile Justice, 1825-1920*, University of Chicago Press, 303 pp., $15.00.

†*The Culture of Professionalism: The Middle Class and the Development of Higher Education in America*, by Burton F. Bledstein, Norton, 354 pp., $12.95; *America By Design: Science, Technology, and the Rise of Corporate Capitalism*, by David F. Noble, Knopf, 384 pp., $12.95.

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in America . . . has taken an inestimable toll of the integrity of individuals." These sweeping if somewhat unclear judgments are made possible in part because Bledstein uses the term professionalism so loosely. The transformation of the undertaker into the mortician, the plumber into the sanitary engineer, the amateur historian into the academic historian—all this to him is part of the history of professionalism, as are changes in the training of doctors, increases in the number of specialties and specialists' organizations, and the rise of academic and professional engineering societies. Even "professional" sports—where the term means something quite different—is swept into the large loose net of his generalizations.

Against all these professions and professionals, Bledstein displays an animus which is never explained. He speaks often of professional "pretensions," and finds something "ominous" in the way the professions attempted to pass judgment on "specific skills and technical competence." But what exactly is so suspicious about all this? After all, in some of the newer professions—like mining engineering, for example—there was obviously a basis of technical knowledge that justified claims to some sort of special competence. In others, there may not have been such a basis, but people honestly thought there was until the development of science (a dangerous phrase, but I stand by it) proved otherwise. In all of them there was undoubtedly some measure of self-delusion, self-enhancement, and undue exclusivity. But in the general attack on professionalism as securing middle-class privilege, these crucial distinctions disappear.

So, for example, we are told how doctors went about intimidating their clients through "rituals and ceremonies" involving the conspicuous display of "new tools and equipment." So likely does this appear on the face of it that the reader finds himself nodding in agreement, until he realizes that the list drawn up by the author to make his point—"anesthetics, the laryngoscope, the microscope, the cardiograph, the thermometer, and the x-ray"—does not actually contain a single example of an instrument that is useless and serves only to mystify. Bledstein seems to be incapable of distinguishing among real advances in knowledge and competence, honest errors, and intended mystification, but unless one does, it would seem impossible to mount a legitimate critique of the pretensions of the professions and the universities that provided training for them.

The claim that the professions were monopolized by the middle classes is not in itself an unreasonable one. One can argue that professional status replaced land, or property, or social status as an indicator of achievement, and that this was accomplished through the new universities, which gave up the teaching of Latin, Greek, and classical mathematics in favor of more practical and usable instruction. Even so, to make this argument fairly, one would have to take into acount the role of the merit-based professions in creating social mobility. It was not only the Anglo-Saxon middle class that found in the university an opportunity to enter the professions and thereby a way of improving its place in the world.

More important, Bledstein does not take into account the autonomous development of the professions themselves as they endeavored to deal with the problems that were then becoming manifest in the society around them. That the professions conferred social status and income may be granted, but they also played a very specific and practical role in 19th-century society. As Bledstein's own list of medical instruments demonstrates, there were extremely useful advances made during this time in methods of diagnosing illness, even if it would take until well into the 20th century before specific drugs or procedures would be developed to deal effectively with diagnosed problems. Whatever else it may have done for the status and income of doctors, the absorption of the medical school into the university and the reduction in the number of proprietary and independent medical schools also improved medicine. It is this aspect of the development of professionalism that is ignored in Bledstein's account, yet without it no real evaluation of the professions is possible.

David Noble's argument is somewhat different. His main concern is not the role of professional engineering in raising personal status, and obviously he cannot discount the great technical feats of engineering as mere "mystification," for after all, there are all those tunnels and bridges and great mining works around to prove otherwise. But he looks critically upon the process whereby engineering moved out of the hands of master craftsmen into those of technically-trained, and then university-trained, professionals. This change resulted, in his view, in placing a monopoly over science and technology in the hands of the middle class. Even worse, it led to the monopolization of technical knowledge in the service of the monster corporation.

The word "monopoly" is a great favorite of present-day Marxist historians, automatically eliminating the necessity for further analysis. Thus, Noble announces mysteriously that "a systematic monopolization of scientific knowledge by the professionals" took place in the late 1800's, and we are duly impressed. All he seems to be saying by this, however, is that the development of science-based technical knowledge brought about the decline of the amateur—of the tinkerer, puttering away at his invention in the family barn—and this undoubtedly did occur in the late 19th and early 20th century. But in what sense can this legitimately be called "monopolization"?

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No law was passed prohibiting tinkering, or preventing tinkerers from getting patents. It simply grew harder to be an effective amateur as mechanical, chemical, and electrical processes became more and more inaccessible to those without scientific training, and as those who employed engineers asked for degrees, membership in professional societies, and the judgment of peers in order to make some assessment of competence. To talk of "monopoly" in this connection is rather like saying that trained mathematicians have brought about a monopolization of higher mathematics. It is not, after all, as though they (or for that matter the engineers) were engaging in efforts to prevent other people from studying mathematics.

The monopoly of "scientific engineering" by the professional engineers, Noble goes on to tell us, was "the reverse side of the monopolization of the scientific engineers by science-based corporations." Once again, Noble makes free with the term "monopoly," and even puts quotation marks around "scientific engineering," to imply that it was not scientific. Yet in what sense can the corporations be said to have "monopolized" scientific engineers? There were also engineers who worked for the academy, engineers who worked for the government, and consulting engineers who worked for themselves. True, there was an increase after World War I, as Noble says, in the proportion of chemists working for industry, but why is this evidence of "monopolization" rather than of growth in the chemical industry?

We seem to be in the grip of a new kind of criticism which substitutes slogans for thinking and does so, moreover, as though it had scored some overwhelming point. Here is Noble, for instance, reflecting darkly on male chauvinism in the professions: "It should be emphasized that this enormously influential class of people was overwhelmingly male. . . . In addition to being a product of industrial capitalism, reflecting class control over the means of production, modern technology in America has been equally a product of a male-dominated culture reflecting male prerogatives and male preferences." What is the reader to make of this mixture of the obvious and ridiculous? Just what would technology with 50 (or 90) per-cent female participation look like, and how would it be different from male technology? What is unargued in the critique of engineering is just how it could be different. Perhaps it could, under different financial and political arrangements, but the persistent blindness to the limits of this difference, to the range of possibilities offered by modern technologically-based societies, permits the illusion to persist that things could be very different, as different as anyone's fantasies could envisage. The existing is contrasted with alternatives that are not explained or developed and that are very likely impossible.

Noble has certainly collected a great deal of information on the relations among engineering, large corporations, higher education, and government, but much of this material does not prove what he thinks it does. Thus, to demonstrate the enslavement of technology by capitalism, he quotes from the president of the Stevens Institute Alumni Association in 1896: "The financial side of engineering is always the most important; the sooner the young professional recedes from the notion that simply because he is a professional man, the position is paramount, the better it will be for him. He must always be subservient to those who represent the money invested in the enterprise." Admittedly, the spirit of 1896 comes through here rather unadorned, but leaving aside the question of tone, what does it mean to say that the professional position is not paramount? Is it not simply to assert that engineers must take into account economic considerations, considerations of efficiency in the investment of capital? These may be expressed through the market, or through state judgment; they may be expressed in dollars or in rubles. But however they are expressed, they cannot be ignored.

Noble is not very clear about just what *should* guide and control professional engineering decisions—he knows only that if businessmen have any part in the process, it must be improper and destructive of humane ends. Thus, quoting from a patent attorney about how the American Telephone and Telegraph Company won out over its competitors, Noble sounds as triumphant as though he had unveiled a nefarious strategy: ". . . one of the first steps taken was to organize a corps of inventive engineers to perfect and improve the telephone system in all directions . . . that by securing accessory inventions, possession of the field might be retained as far as possible, and for as long a time as possible." So? Would he have preferred uninventive engineers, and would he have preferred not to "perfect and improve" the system? The result of this strategy has after all been a rather good telephone service, no more expensive than that of other countries where the telephone is state-run (whether by a capitalist or a socialist state), treating its workers no worse than they are treated in these other systems, and admittedly also supplying substantial dividends, bond interest, and other returns of capital to many rich people and a good number of not-so-rich ones.

NOBLE'S tone here is that of a man convinced he has proved a point, but what point has he proved? That there should be no patent system at all? But this would discourage invention. That corporations should not be allowed to buy up rights to patents and control a complex enterprise like the modern telephone system? But this would make it very hard for owners of individual inventions to get together—

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and if they did, would the result be all that different from AT&T? That the state should own the patents? This is obviously a possibility, since state-owned telephone systems, and even socialist state-owned telephone systems, do exist. Presumably this is the solution Noble would prefer—but on what grounds, since it would not lead to better or cheaper service, or be less exploitative of labor? There is a certain advantage to presenting one's facts with a sneer—it obviates the necessity of making a case. But the reader, honestly perplexed, is still left in the dark, wondering what, in the present system, seems so terrible to Noble and in what way another would be better?

One can raise the same questions in regard to Noble's detailed account of the relations between business and the universities in developing engineering education. Science-based corporations needed technically-trained personnel, so they trained some themselves and hoped the universities would train others. They also developed partnerships with the universities, and provided equipment and supports for university education. Noble tells this interesting and important story as though its wickedness were self-evident, the automatic assumption being that the universities thereby became creatures of the corporations. The possibility that the universities were also making use of the corporations—to expand their educational offerings, and to assure their graduates of jobs—and thus strengthening themselves as autonomous institutions with separate interests of their own plays no role in Noble's account. If universities keep records on students and their capacities, it is in order to aid industry, according to Noble. But does it not also aid students in getting jobs, and thus incidentally advertise the value of the university to other potential students? Anyone who has served on both sides of this particular divide must be aware that the university's exploitation of the corporation is as likely—indeed, more likely—than the reverse. It is only a built-in bias that leads Noble to take for granted the second possibility rather than the first.

The same bias is to be detected in his discussion of the relationships between organized professional engineering and the federal government. The corporations, according to Noble, used government just as they used the universities, directly or through the professional engineering societies which were dominated by men who had either come out of the corporations, worked for them, or consulted for them. In short, not a move can be made but Noble sees in it the hidden hand of big business. If a Bureau of Standards is set up, it is merely another way to serve science-based industry, and never mind that it may also increase efficiency, improve America's capacity to compete, reduce costs, and all the rest. "The spirit of standardization," he writes portentously, "thus promised to weld science to power, and to lend the might of legal and moral authority the legitimacy of scientific truth . . . ." Is he then, one wonders, *against* standardization—preferring no bolt to match any nut but the one made for it—or is he in favor only of socialist standardization? That anyone can benefit from any rational or efficient action but the corporation seems beyond his imagination. If the federal government encourages research, it is because science-based industry wants it and is getting the people to pay for it. A likely possibility, but are there not other objectives to government-sponsored research? A stronger defense? A better internationally competitive position? Better products for consumers? That government can use industry is as unimaginable to Noble as that the university can use industry.

STEMMING from the same Marxist tradition as the work of Bledstein and Noble, yet quite different in its complexity, is Magali Sarfatti Larson's *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis.** She too emphasizes the role of the professions in enhancing and defending social status; she too explores their links with corporate capitalism and the university; and she too is overly attached to the term "monopoly." But in her examination of the history of the professions she is consistently aware that there are conflicting interests even in capitalist society, and that the autonomy of the professions, of professional education, and of the university is not simply an illusion. The scientific or—to use her terminology—"cognitive" base of the professions, in which competence is in principle open to all, inevitably makes the professions more than an ideology to protect privilege.

Opposing the unequal results in income and status that emerge from an open educational system, Professor Larson nevertheless does see that the system supports legitimate values and real needs: ". . . experts and professionals do possess cognitive and technical competences which are important, if not always essential, for the social development of productive forces and the full satisfaction of human needs." Her book maintains the Marxist tradition of criticizing the present from a future that is unexplicated and to me obscure, but its saving grace is that it recognizes the reality as well as the ideology of professional competence. "Today," she writes, "knowledge is acquired and produced within educational and occupational hierarchies which are . . . inegalitarian, anti-democratic, and alienating." But, she goes on, "these structures achieve a fusion between the progressive content of special competences and the requirements of a system of domination." This is a good sample of the tensions within her approach, as well, alas, of the unrelentingly "professional" style

*University of California Press, 309 pp., $14.95.

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that will make her book inaccessible to the general reader.

THE most radical attack on professionalism comes from the remarkable Ivan Illich, who has brought a strikingly original vision, shaped by his work in developing countries, to the criticism of modern education, modern medicine, and most of the other professions that seek, through the use of advanced methods, to improve conditions of life in poor countries. Illich does not see the problem as primarily one of either the interests of the middle class or the power of business. He is as critical of professionalism in Russia—or China, or Cuba—as in the capitalist or developing world. Rather, the issue to him is how human competence is invariably reduced by professionalism, whether based on true science or false pretension. He has mounted an effective critique of advanced medicine and elaborate hospitals in developing countries, whose first need is for clean water. He has criticized extensive educational systems that serve to create from the upper-middle classes the professionals developing countries can do without, while neglecting to provide basic literacy.

Illich's virtue is in his details. Thus, he points out how the poor manage well enough to house themselves in Latin American cities through their own talents and the use of scrap material. Unfortunately, the experts then arrive on the scene, and may convince the authorities (who are already convinced) that only concrete high-rises, beyond the capacity of the slum-dwellers to fabricate for themselves, and requiring advanced machinery and skilled labor, can solve their housing problems. More sophisticated experts turn up, impressed by what the poor have done for themselves, and wishing to learn from it. Eager to improve the self-help process, they begin suggesting improvements, which mean new machines, methods, and products that make the whole thing more expensive and less familiar. In a word, they professionalize it.

But Illich's critique is not limited to professionalism in poor countries. In his newest book,* he also questions what we in the advanced countries have done to ourselves, thanks to our inordinate fascination with technology. To what end, he asks, do we develop all our medical technology but to delay grotesquely deaths which are inevitable? To what end our staggeringly expensive hospitals, which produce as much ill-health as health? To what end our inefficient schooling systems, which cannot even teach simple reading to our children?

One may not agree with these positions, but Illich at least looks at things with a fresh eye, and a remarkable acuteness for contemporary ailments. He writes, in one inspired passage: "We talk about the manufacture of housing or the delivery of medical care; people are no longer regarded as fit to heal or house themselves. . . . Instead of learning how to nurse grandmother, the teenager learns to picket the hospital that does not admit her."

Illich does not actually expect us to learn to house or heal ourselves the way modern builders or doctors do. The issue is not only that the professions are inadequate, but that modern society has set false goals—more commodities, more comfort, escape from pain. He argues rather that we must all, developed and developing countries alike, reduce our requirements and move toward ascetic subsistence.

No one can deny the attractiveness of this vision of self-dependence, in which the experts are dismissed, not because man has become so expert himself but because he has lowered his expectations to the point where he no longer has need of them. And certainly part of the vision we can all adopt and learn from. Who knows how many doctors have been made superfluous by jogging (though Illich would prefer the elimination of enough modern transportation so as to make bicycling or walking necessary)? But there would appear to be limits to this process of reduction of needs.

Take, for example, his image of the picketing teenager. Certainly she (or he) could nurse grandmother as well—and perhaps even better—than the hospital or nursing home, despite their array of professionals, from doctors specializing in gerontological medicine to practical nurses. But what would convince her to do it, since it is no longer regarded as a duty, and she can assuage her guilt by assuring herself that others, paid for by the state, will do it better anyway? There seem now to be social limits to taking care of our own needs ourselves, or reducing those needs to the point where we can take care of them without experts. There may also be technical limits. It is not only that needs have expanded, but that old needs are met in new ways, and I for one find it difficult to see how, except for small groups, we can work our way back to becoming a more ascetic, needs-reducing society. Nor do I know how we could convince developing countries not to expand their needs, or, for that matter, how their present needs can be met without the help of those techniques we are being urged to abandon. Still, if Illich's vision of a world without professionals seems impossible of attainment, it has contributed to a useful criticism of professionals.

NONE of the professions—not even doctors and engineers, with their seemingly secure scientific credentials—has escaped the current attack on professionalism. But the most hapless of all professionals in the present climate

*_Toward a History of Needs_, Pantheon, 143 pp., $7.95.

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have been those belonging to the so-called "helping professions," the social workers, psychologists, guidance counselors, and others who run the social-service agencies dealing with people in distress of one kind or another. The scientific basis of these professions, assuming there is one, is rather shaky, resting as it does on the social sciences, which offer only sandy footing, and developmental psychology and psychiatry, which are not much firmer. The present-day social services were started by high-status volunteers, proffering philanthropy. They are now staffed by full-time professionals doing a job. If there has always been some suspicion of the motives of volunteers—what secret prurience or lust for power would lead people to involve themselves in the troubles of others?—what can the present-day professional, working for wages, hope for in the way of understanding or sympathy? Not very much, we may conclude, from *Doing Good: The Limits of Benevolence*,* a collection of essays on social policy by a psychiatrist, a literary critic, a historian, and a civil-rights lawyer.

THIS extremely interesting work, based —as the introduction tells us—on many long discussions among the participants and outsiders, is a kind of four-way panel discussion on the subject of what can be done, at this point in our history, to ameliorate the lot of the suffering and underprivileged in America. The psychiatrist, Willard Gaylin, and the lawyer, Ira Glasser, provide most of the polemics with their running debate on the respective virtues of law and love in protecting the helpless; historical perspective is provided by the critic, Steven Marcus, who demonstrates the dreadful effects of the English Poor Laws, as reflected in the work of Dickens and Wordsworth, and by the historian, David Rothman, author of the important book, *The Discovery of the Asylum*, which initiated the new criticism of early American social agencies.

Rothman contributes a thoughtful analysis of the recent dissolution of the Progressive consensus, which unquestioningly assumed that the state could benefit people in need. He points out that the Progressives, unlike us, did not perceive any conflicts of interest in dealing with the problems of delinquent or neglected children. They felt free to create new kinds of institutions for these children —in particular the juvenile court, in which the ordinary protections of criminal law were lifted—because they had no doubts whatsoever that the judge and the probation officer and the social worker would know what was best for the child, even if his parents disagreed. We, on the other hand, as Rothman points out, have lost that confidence. We see conflicts of interest everywhere—among teachers and college administrations and students, between wardens and prisoners, between psychiatrists and mental patients, between attendants and mentally retarded patients, between the juvenile court and the child, between the parent and the child; the list is endless. As Rothman puts it: "We are witnessing the dissolution of the Progressive version of the community as a viable concept. . . . The very notion of a harmony of interests seems deceptive and mischievous."

This breakdown has led us to expand the protection that the law—in particular the Constitution, under those infinitely elastic phrases, "due process" and "equal protection"—offers to all those subject to governmental action: students, children, prisoners, the institutionalized mentally ill and mentally retarded. The new mood is aptly summarized by Rothman: ". . . better to trust to the skills of a lawyer in court than to the good intentions of the state. Presupposing conflict, let the battle be fought with both sides armed." And given the recent reputation of the state, who can object? At this point, however, the psychiatrist on the panel, Willard Gaylin, speaking in a sense for all those who have the care of the dependent in their charge, voices certain reservations.

To Gaylin, love is not merely a sentiment, but rather a biological dictate, owing to the long period of helplessness of the human child. He acknowledges that this dictate is often violated—even in the paradigmatic relations of mother and child—and that it is the less likely to operate the farther we move from the mother-child relationship. We can expect less from the grown child caring for an aged parent, less from the professional or sub-professional caring for the institutionalized. Certainly Gaylin is fully aware of the horrors in institutions that called for the intervention of civil-rights lawyers like Ira Glasser. Yet it is clear which side he is on: however hard it may be to bring about a spirit of benevolence toward those who must be cared for, he is doubtful that the law can be of much help. He admits that "there will always be the need for vigilance in recognizing the limitations of government as surrogate parents." Nevertheless, he would limit this vigilance. "The language of rights, with its litigious and paranoid assumption that good can only be received from others by pursuit and protection of the law, must also recognize that the good that can be received from others in that way is quite limited. We cannot, for example, 'coerce' a parent into caring for a child. . . ."

"Paranoid" is a fighting word, and Ira Glasser, the lawyer, rises to the provocation. In any case, we expect lawyers to be combative. The New York Civil Liberties Union, which Glasser heads, represented the plaintiffs in the recent Willowbrook case, in which the State of New York was required to improve and change its treatment of 5,300 retarded inmates, and Glasser cites the case as a demonstration of the efficacy of law where all else failed. He sees no problem in the aggressive defense

*Pantheon, 171 pp., $8.95.

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of the rights of the mentally retarded to the point where, as is now becoming the norm, a lawyer or his equivalent must represent a mentally retarded child in any decision made for him by parents or professionals. If Gaylin argues that the care of the dependent must be rooted in love, Glasser retorts: ". . . who loves welfare recipients or the residents of public housing? . . . The record of public charity is an unloving record of punishments, degradation, humiliation, instrusion, and incarceration." Glasser of course does not propose that the lawyer substitute for this absent love—who ever heard of a loving lawyer?—but he is absolutely certain that the lawyer is necessary to prevent abuse.

As for what is needed beyond preventing abuse, Glasser has nothing to say, and might well take refuge in the principle, if we cannot do good, at least let us not do harm. Gaylin, as befits his professional role, thinks it is still possible to do good, though even he has no answer either. (In the course of the discussion that preceded this book, Rothman tells us, Gaylin announced that he "finally understood the motive impulse of the adversarial movement: to substitute for the hard-nosed, belligerent, and tough-minded psychiatrist the attention of the gentle, understanding, empathetic lawyer!")

There are no winners and no losers in the debate. To care for the dependent we need both the love and benevolence specified by Gaylin, and the legal protections specified by Glasser. The dilemma, however, is that love cannot be evoked by court order. After the psychiatrist and the lawyer, representatives of two eminent professions, have crossed swords in this debate, the job of nurturing and caring remains in the hands of humbler professionals—social-work administrators, social workers, physical and occupational therapists, recreation specialists, nurses, teachers, and, below the very lowest rungs of the professional ladder, ward attendants and jailkeepers. What of all these, who bear the brunt of dealing with the dependent, the mentally ill and retarded, the neglected, and the criminal, people whom we refuse to keep in our houses—whether the state takes them away or not—and whom we often will not allow into our neighborhoods, to live in the sad imitations of "homes" that current professional wisdom now devises for them? Glasser can be belligerent in defending the dependent against the state, because no one really minds a tough stand against the state. But is there anyone coming to the defense of those hapless functionaries who must do the job, with all its day-to-day horrors? When it appeared that the many requirements of the court order were not being carried out properly at Willowbrook, the lawyers in the case went to court to attack the good will of the state. The state official responsible for mental retardation, who was not increasing the number of attendants as fast as the order called for, pointed out that it was not easy to get people to stick to a job which involved changing diapers on a forty-year-old man.

It seems to me that in its next stage, criticism of the professions should take account of the lesser professionals and their problems in taking care of those we entrust to them, or rather, shove off on them. At that point, one suspects, the certainties of well-meaning lawyers may be moderated by an understanding of the real complexity of things. Glasser claims in this book that it was not "a lack of money, a lack of knowledge, or a lack of administrative capacity" that impeded progress in the Willowbrook case. Rather, it was "a lack of will. . . ." The problem is not as simple as that, however. It is true that money has been available, but our knowledge is inadequate, administrative capacity is always in short supply, and as for will . . . whose will? That of Governor Carey? Commissioner Coughlin? The director of Willowbrook, with her 4,000 employees, or any of the other officials responsible for placing the mentally retarded in community settings? And how do we get in touch with the wills of the lower employees who deal directly with the mentally retarded, or of the people in the surrounding communities in which they are to be placed? To refer to lack of will in such a situation is tantamount to confessing that we do not know where to go from here. But wherever we do go in dealing with these intractable problems, we will not get very far by denouncing those who do what we—the lawyers and the critics alike—would not be willing to do.

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Blacks, Jews, and New York Politics

Dorothy Rabinowitz

EARLY this past summer, two events occurred in New York that were sufficiently ominous to warrant the anxieties they produced in community leaders and city officials alike. On June 14, in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, a popular black community leader was killed in a struggle with police who were trying to arrest him. Two nights later, in the same neighborhood, yeshivah students chased, captured, and beat into a coma a sixteen-year-old black believed to have attacked an elderly Hasid. There were more ominous signs in the following weeks in the tone of the protest meetings put together by some Crown Heights blacks and numerous others from outside the neighborhood. A Protestant minister, to emerge from the turbulence of those days as the chief spokesman of the blacks, got a standing ovation at a protest rally in the course of a fiery attack on the Hasidim. He is reported to have said, "We're going to get the Jews and the people in the long black coats!"

With talk of violence increasing, and with black spokesmen threatening retribution for crimes which, they said, the Hasidim had perpetrated on the black community of Crown Heights, Mayor Edward Koch appointed a Council on Intergroup Relations to defuse tensions. The fact is, however, that black-Jewish tensions had been palpably in the air for many months prior to these events. Furthermore, the anxiety generated in Jews by the Crown Heights affair is bound up with a larger uneasiness, and in particular with several episodes in the city's recent history in which Jews, as Jews, have been singled out for public attack.

The most conspicuous case of this kind has been that of Mayor Koch himself, whose Jewishness has been the object of pointed attention from the day he took office, and even for a time before it. During the election campaign, on a tour of the North Bronx stronghold of his rival, Mario Cuomo, Koch was assailed in the streets by anti-Semitic epithets of so hoary a vintage that one of Koch's chief aides had to explain to his young daughter, who had grown up oblivious of such terms, what a "kike" was. Then, when he was swept to a surprise victory over several other mayoral candidates, almost all of whom had been given a better chance of winning than he, Koch almost immediately ran afoul of black legislators.

Some of their hostility, at least, was predictable and had a history to it. In the early 70's, Koch, then a Congressman, had taken a strong stand against the building of a massive low-income housing project in Forest Hills, one of the few intact middle-class Jewish communities left in the city. But as early as the day after Koch's election as mayor, word began circulating of a new disquiet: Koch's administration, it appeared, would be the first in many years in which no black sat on the Board of Estimate. The main source of this intelligence was Percy Sutton, the former borough president of Manhattan, who had chosen not to run again for that office in order to compete—unsuccessfully, as it turned out—for the mayoralty. In yielding his chance to be reelected to the borough presidency of Manhattan, a post traditionally held by blacks and one which also commanded a seat on the Board of Estimate, Sutton had, in effect, given up that one black seat (now held by Andrew Stein).

Such were the beginnings, in part, of an argument a good number of black politicians were to take up in the coming months—the argument that blacks had been brought to a new level of powerlessness with the advent of the Koch administration. The other part had to do with Koch's Jewishness. Early on, black legislators and other spokesmen for the black community began to associate the policy decisions and the appointments made by the new mayor, all of which they vehemently opposed, with the fact of his Jewishness. Perhaps the first public expression of this view came from Fred Samuel, a Harlem councilman, who observed that as far as blacks were concerned, Koch was now the "Jewish mayor." It did not matter that Koch's predecessor, Abraham Beame, had also been a Jew, for Beame, Samuel explained to a New York *Times* reporter, "knew how to reach out to the black community." By contrast, Koch's appointment of "so many Jewish commissioners" and his "tightening up on the poverty boards" (the mayor had announced plans for a stringent

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restructuring of the city's poverty programs) caused him to be seen as a representative of narrow, i.e., Jewish, interests.

There soon followed a host of warnings from black legislators and business and civic leaders against a "rising tide of anti-Semitism" which the new administration had, by its actions, supposedly engendered. The director of the New York City Urban League asserted that the Koch administration had "brought anti-Jewish and anti-black feelings out into the open." Writing in the *Amsterdam News*, the city's black newspaper, Reverend Lawrence Lucas, pastor of the Resurrection Roman Catholic Church in Harlem, observed that "From poverty programs on . . . it seems that only Jews can be found in the city to be qualified."

To the warnings of anti-Semitism were added predictions of riots—"the type of street-oriented political mobilization that many in the black communities feel is not only inevitable but necessary," as the *Amsterdam News* put it. James Dumpson, a black who was formerly head of the city's Human Resources Administration, noted that "there is a seething discontent in this town on racial grounds that will make the past look like Fourth of July fireworks." "He will blow this place up," Bruce Llewellyn, a black business leader, warned, referring to the mayor. "I think the frustrations are going to build to such a point that things are going to explode," observed Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm.

IF THEIR legislators and civic leaders were to be believed, then, the city's black citizens had been brought by the new Koch administration to the brink of civil unrest. And indeed, no observer could fail to see that certain of the new administration's policies and pronouncements were causing unrest among blacks; but neither could such an observer have failed to see precisely among which blacks this unrest was primarily to be found. For the issues over which the legislators and community leaders were so exercised had less to do with matters crucial to the interests of the black community as a whole than with matters crucial to the interests of a much more easily defined entity, the black establishment. Those issues, moreover, came down to two, or two-in-one—namely, black loss of patronage, and control of the city's poverty programs.

Shortly after Koch took office, it was announced that the city would terminate contracts with five anti-poverty organizations. Among these was the sprawling Bedford-Stuyvesant Youth in Action program, whose audits showed that 95 per cent of the funds for which it was responsible had been (as the mayor's office explained with some delicacy of phrasing) "managed with accounting systems inadequate to safeguard the resources." Other audits and investigations had uncovered a high degree of corruption and incompetence. In one program, for example, designed to provide college scholarships for the poor, it was found that in an annual budget of some $4.6 million, nearly $1.5 million had been devoted to "administrative expenses." In another, the Fort Greene Poverty Corporation, the board had voted in as director an administrator who had just been convicted of stealing the corporation's funds; he was finally removed when the mayor's office threatened to withhold further funding.

Having terminated some poverty programs, and having announced his intent to restructure others, the mayor made known yet another plan destined to draw the wrath of black politicians and community leaders. Summer jobs for youths from welfare and low-income families, dispensations long under the control of black churches, community organizations, and political clubhouses, and a source of patronage power to black politicians, were henceforth to be taken over by the mayor's office and assigned by computer-operated lottery. Worse: when the head of the National Association of Minority CPA Firms requested that the mayor set aside a number of city auditing contracts as an affirmative-action measure, the mayor replied that although he was willing to set aside several contracts for *small* businesses, he was unalterably opposed to preferential treatment for any group on the basis of race. The mayor had given a similar answer to fifteen black ministers and community leaders who had come to City Hall to present grievances concerning black unemployment, and to demand that they themselves be appointed as a committee in charge of this area; the confrontation ended when the ministers announced a sit-in and were finally led away in handcuffs.

The list of complaints did not stop here. Not only, it seems, was the mayor guilty of stripping power and money from the black political establishment, and not only were there few blacks remaining high in the mayor's administration, but those who did remain were the wrong blacks. Thus, Koch had shed 6.3 million federal dollars from Model Cities, a relic of the anti-poverty wars of the 60's, *and* had appointed Haskell Ward, a specialist on African affairs from the State Department and a black with no ties whatsoever to the city's black establishment, as head of the Community Development Agency. Ward was the one who broke the news that the city's three largest poverty programs were to be terminated; he was, black legislators complained, an "outsider," a "black who couldn't find his way to Harlem," and thus another symbol of the mayor's insensitivity.

This insensitivity was not limited to acts but extended to language and general style as well. The mayor was berated for using the term "povertician" in referring to those who had learned to manipulate poverty programs to their advantage, and also, more surprisingly, for demanding "competence" in the management of these programs. "Competence," explained a mediator later in the summer, was a "code word," and the mayor should

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have known that blacks would perceive it as such.

As for the mayor's style, the problem was that he appeared actually to mean what he said—a quality for which he was compared invidiously to his predecessor, Abraham Beame. Whereas Beame, like Koch, had declared himself in favor of the merit system, he had nonetheless left intact a poverty establishment maintained nearly exclusively by blacks and Puerto Ricans since the early 60's, as well as the patronage network on which the city's politicians, white and black, had traditionally depended. For it was not what Beame *said* that mattered to the black politicians, but what he did, or rather did not do. Koch, by contrast, had suited deed to words, and by upsetting the traditional system of political spoils—jobs and influence—had become the "Jewish mayor."

NO APPOINTMENT by the mayor was to cause a greater furor than that of Blanche Bernstein as head of the Human Resources Administration. Miss Bernstein became the object of concerted protest. She was a "certified racist," according to a full-page advertisement in the *Amsterdam News*, and a "hardliner" on welfare—this because in a 1973 paper for the Joint Economic Committee Miss Bernstein had observed that high welfare benefits destroyed the incentive to work, and because she had refused more recently to lend her support to a campaign for increased welfare benefits. Of more immediate concern to the association of black social workers orchestrating the opposition to Miss Bernstein was her dismissal, on the grounds of poor performance, of one of the heads of the Family and Adult Services Division of HRA, an administrator well connected in black political circles. An additional cause of opposition was her failure to send a prompt answer to a letter of the black social workers demanding a meeting with the new commissioner to ascertain whether, as the letter put it, she had been "appointed as a hatchet woman to get rid of blacks in HRA."

The truth was that after Miss Bernstein took office a white Jewish administrator and three blacks had been asked to resign; of the three positions vacated by blacks, two were filled by blacks, and another black held a newly established post in fiscal affairs. Furthermore, the number of blacks appointed and promoted to executive-level jobs under the new commissioner was *greater* than that under any previous administration, including that of her black predecessor.

Yet these easily verifiable facts in no way diminished the fervor of the attack on Miss Bernstein by the black social workers and by the editors of the *Amsterdam News*. Not deterred by facts, either, were other black spokesmen who continued to repeat that Miss Bernstein had "replaced the four top black HRA commissioners while retaining the ten top white administrators, thus creating a lily-white decision-making power structure." In a rhetorical sleight-of-hand altogether reflective of the uses to which the black community is now habitually put by its official spokesmen, the *Amsterdam News* first suggested a similarity between the new HRA commissioner and certain notorious Southern racists, and in the same breath worried aloud that just such a notion might take hold among blacks, thus setting off street riots: "It will not take much for Miss Bernstein's name to become synonymous in the black community with Bull Connor and Jim Clark—those enemies of the black community of the recent Southern past—whether she deserves such a designation or not."

The campaign against Miss Bernstein, like the black establishment's dispute with the mayor, had little to do with issues of social policy and much to do with the pragmatic concerns of a constituency that could by no stretch of the imagination be called the poor. Most revealing in this regard were the "fact sheets" put out by the black social workers and others concerning Miss Bernstein's "anti-poor," "racist," and "anti-people" attitudes. Prominent among the concerns of the "poor" and the "indigent" raised in these was the number of white HRA administrators who were in the position of awarding "major contractual services," the number of contracts given white agencies, and the greater number of whites as opposed to blacks in executive positions and earning over $30,000 a year. Not unreasonable concerns, perhaps, but of dubious relation to the interests of the welfare poor. Like so many recent campaigns waged in the name of the poor, this one did not quite manage to conceal the fact that its primary purpose lay in bettering the lives and fortunes of a much smaller and infinitely less needy group, the welfare and poverty professionals.

The controversy over Miss Bernstein was the second such in which it was suggested that certain socially reprehensible attitudes held by officials of the new administration were, in their nature, Jewish. In the case of Mayor Koch, the connection between his attitudes ("arrogant," "bigoted") and his Jewishness remained only a suggestion. But in the case of Miss Bernstein, at least one black spokesman publicly declared that the very elements in her makeup which rendered her unfit to head the Human Resources Administration—racism, insensitivity, lack of charity toward the poor—were attributable to "her Jewish middle-class background." The New York *Times* reporter in whose front-page article this quotation first appeared further noted that many blacks specifically identified as Jewish, not as white, those persons they disliked in the Koch administration.

SUCH was the history which preceded the Crown Heights affair, and which made that affair so dangerous a portent. For here, finally, were grounds for that mob violence so often predicted by politicians and editorial writers

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speaking in the name of the black community. Two highly inflammatory incidents had followed close on one another, and the city press produced headlines—"Fifty Vigilantes Brutally Beat Black Youth" (New York *Post*)—of a sort that might have incited the most peaceable of communities.

Inevitably, the two separate events became entangled. The first, the death of Arthur Miller—killed while being forced into a police squad car—had incensed Crown Heights blacks and left the police unnerved; perhaps that is why they made so quick an arrest in the second event, the beating of Victor Rhodes. The two arrested Hasidim, both in their middle twenties, were charged with taking part in the beating despite protests from other Jews that the men were innocent travelers, Canadian citizens who had chanced to be driving through the neighborhood just as the police were looking for someone to apprehend. "Give us the right ones and we'll let them go," the police told some protesting Hasidim, who responded to this virtual admission that the two Canadians were being held as hostages by putting up $40,000 in bail.

Ascertaining the facts in the Arthur Miller case was simple—the direct cause of death was sustained pressure on the windpipe, apparently administered by the (black) auxiliary policeman who had helped in the arrest. By comparison, labyrinthine confusion surrounded the Rhodes incident, with blacks charging that twenty or more Hasidim had without provocation set upon an innocent youth, and the Hasidim charging that Rhodes had attacked an elderly Jew. One version had it that Rhodes hit the Jew with a stick, another that he grabbed his *yarmulke*, one that the attackers were yeshivah students who passed Rhodes on their return from a wedding, another that they were Jews who had rushed from their houses on hearing a call for help. This much, at any rate, was clear: having heard cries of an attack, and having identified Rhodes as the attacker, a number of Hasidim chased, caught, and beat him comatose.

It was not the first time Jews and blacks had clashed in Crown Heights, where still pleasant tree-lined streets house some 30,000 Hasidim and 55,000 blacks. In no other section of the city, perhaps, have intergroup rivalries been more intense, the contest for political power more vividly defined. The Jews are serious voters; the Hasidim among them, in particular, have political "clout," the product of their community's vote-delivering capacity. It is this, Crown Heights black leaders have alleged in recent years, which gives the Hasidim disproportionate political influence. Taking up this charge shortly after the Rhodes incident, a lead article in the *Village Voice* explained that the Hasidim run Crown Heights virtually as they wish, to the detriment of the black majority living there: "Everyone of age among the Hasidim registers to vote, and votes; and nearly everyone votes according to orders from above." It is "a perfectly legal way to run elections," allowed the *Voice*, "like the delivery of any other commodity"—the suggestion being that there is something both conspiratorial and unsavory in the voting behavior of Crown Heights Jews.

THE allegation that the Jews "control" Crown Heights became, after the Rhodes incident, the dominant issue in the conflict, overshadowing even the death of Arthur Miller. Again, the roots of resentment ran deep. In no other area of the city had that cornerstone of activist faith, "community control," been used to greater effect than by the Hasidim of Crown Heights. The Hasidim even had their own ambulance, a circumstance that had come about after one of their rabbis, Samuel Schrage, died of a heart attack when ambulance attendants had arrived too late and too drunk to get him to a hospital on time. The Hasidim subsequently collected $20,000 and purchased for community use an ambulance which remained parked before Lubavitcher headquarters. Black community leaders maintained that the ambulance the hasidic community kept for its own was city-owned and paid for with tax dollars. Although there was no truth in the contention, it continued to be raised regularly in the course of newspaper interviews.

So great was the political influence of the Hasidim, black leaders averred, that they even controlled the local police, as evidenced by the 'round-the-clock patrol cars assigned, since 1966, to Lubavitcher headquarters and to the residence of the Lubavitcher *rebbe*, Menachem Schneerson. The year before, there had been a march on Lubavitcher headquarters demanding an end to the guard on the ground that blacks, in fear for their lives on account of the hasidic street patrols, had their own need of the police. Mayor Beame heard these demands and answered, with the accommodating art for which he was justly famed, and a touch, possibly, of mordancy, that the police cars would not be removed but he would see to it personally that anyone in need of protection from the Hasidim would have the help of the police.

Among the leaders of that earlier march, and one of the voices in the new protests as well, was Reverend Heron Sam, long a militant antagonist of the Hasidim. (In an open letter to the *Amsterdam News* some months ago, Reverend Sam urged blacks to beware of "Zionist expansion," meaning the buying by Hasidim of real estate.) Another leader of the black unity organization formed after the Miller and Rhodes incidents was Reverend Herbert Daughtry, a self-styled Crown Heights community leader whose residence was in New Jersey, whose church was in downtown Brooklyn, at some remove from Crown Heights,

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and who was a graduate of the New Jersey state prison system, where he had served time for armed robbery and forgery. It was Daughtry whose speeches against the Hasidim made him overnight the leader of the Crown Heights protest.

An initial and highly emotional meeting was held soon after the Rhodes incident. Among the speakers was His Excellency Dramaine Oauattara of the Organization of African Unity, who compared the fates of Miller and Rhodes with that of Steven Biko. Plans were made to form a Black United Front, an association to protect blacks from hasidic "terrorists"—Reverend Daughtry's term for the street patrol organized by the Hasidim—and from the police. The Black United Front was initiated a week later, with some three hundred black men snuffing out candles with their bare fingers and mingling blood in an oath-taking ceremony. Led by Reverend Daughtry, the green-jacketed members of the Front held a march the following Sunday.

Fear that the day might bring violence seemed not unreasonable, and, as usual, black spokesmen were in no way anxious to dispel that fear. Indeed, Dr. Vernal Cave, a founding member of the Black United Front, noted, in the course of an interview with a *Times* reporter, that if blacks could not stop the city and the Hasidim from kicking them around, "maybe it will be time for people like me to step aside and let the people who say that violence is the only answer take over." To complicate matters further, the New York Patrolmen's Benevolent Association had chosen the same Sunday to hold a march of its own in Crown Heights, ostensibly in memory of the police officers slain there in the line of duty. The "memorial" march—a barely disguised union action undertaken to apply pressure at a time when the city was negotiating the police contract and meant to suggest, as well, a counter-rally against the blacks—produced its intended confrontation. Scores of off-duty policemen and clenched-fist blacks stood face to face screaming mutual insults, under the eyes of the bemused Hasidim, who looked down upon the spectacle from the roof of Lubavitcher headquarters. They were soon to hear Reverend Daughtry tell the protesters that they stood that day in the shadow of their oppressors. Appeals were made for a boycott of hasidic stores, and were followed by calls to the uniformed police guarding Lubavitcher headquarters to stand aside for just ten minutes and let the crowd do its work. Earlier that day, sound trucks of the Black United Front had rolled through the streets of Crown Heights threatening that the houses of Hasidim would be burned.

The next day, the press congratulated the Black United Front for having held a peaceful rally. Two *Village Voice* reporters took the occasion to note the "insularity" of the Hasidim and their "somewhat affronting self-image as the guiding light of the world," and to complain as well about the employment by the Hasidim of black construction workers in the conversion of old buildings into yeshivah dormitories. The only people (aside from the Jews) who appeared to have taken serious note of the actual tenor of the rally were a coalition of twenty-four black Baptist ministers who publicly dissociated themselves from the anti-Semitic attitudes in evidence at the rally and from any organization intent on fomenting anti-Semitism. As for the *Amsterdam News*, it ran an approving banner headline: "Blacks Warn Jews."

IT WAS left for the New York *Times* to ask editorially for a view of the situation in Crown Heights which took account of the other side, and specifically of the many attacks and daily harassments to which Hasidim were subjected by the black and Hispanic majority surrounding them. Indeed, as the *Times* said, the hasidic community had suffered grievously over the years. Perhaps the most searing incident in recent memory was the mugging of a ninety-year-old Jew, found tied to his bed, his *tallis* stuffed down his throat. Not long after that, a seventeen-year-old yeshivah student had been stabbed to death by two Hispanics as he walked out of a synagogue; this was a crime of the sort usually described by the police as "motiveless" (which is to say the killers had not wanted money), but whose motive was nonetheless clear: the killers had wanted to kill the Jew in the long black coat who had crossed their path. Another student had been shot in the arm by a black, while another, older Hasid had been shot to death as he returned from Sabbath prayers.

It had been in the face of these crimes and lesser ones that the Hasidim had organized their street patrols, which some blacks characterized as the operations of vigilantes. Yet so efficacious was this militant nightly stance against crime that during the 1977 blackout, the looters who ravaged neighborhood after surrounding neighborhood had not dared to enter Crown Heights where the Hasidim lived. The Hasidim were known to race into the streets at the sound of a scream or any other signal for help (and had interfered, thus, in crimes against blacks as well as whites).

In all, the catalogue of crime and harassment against Hasidim was a long one, and it was this, as the *Times* pointed out, which lay behind the beating of Victor Rhodes. To say this is hardly to exculpate Rhodes's attackers, none of whose outrage justified the violence perpetrated on a symbolic target, whatever he may have done—much less one so outnumbered. Few, indeed, were the Jews in New York to whom, particularly in the days immediately following, the Rhodes affair was not a painful or disquieting event. Yet the use which Crown Heights black leaders made of that unhappy incident was chilling. For, like the controversies stirred up around Mayor Koch and Blanche Bernstein, the controversy issuing from the

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Rhodes affair was at heart an expression of a bitter contest for power and for gain. In the ensuing weeks, far greater attention came to be lavished on the beating of Victor Rhodes than on the death, at police hands, of Arthur Miller—one would not, indeed, have guessed that Rhodes was the one who was alive and Miller the one who was dead. The logic of emphasis was undeniable: between opposing those whom they took to be their oppressors (the police) and those whom they took to be their competitors (the Jews), the blacks chose their competitors.

AT THE peak of the Crown Heights conflict, a black resident stated in a newspaper interview his wish that the Hasidim might be more sociable neighbors, but asserted as well that because of them, the neighborhood was still a good one and his wife was safe on its streets. The Hasidim, he said, were hard-working and peaceful people, and besides, he had no desire to live in an all-black neighborhood of the kind Crown Heights would surely have become had not the Hasidim determined to stay there. Another black citizen wrote to the *Amsterdam News* chastising that paper for its hostile representations of the Hasidim, reminding it that "after all, many black people" deliberately *chose* to live next to the hard-working and able Hasidim.

However drowned by the oratory of Reverend Daughtry and others, these viewpoints could not have been isolated ones. And as it turned out, despite wishful thinking about "street-oriented mobilizations," despite virtual solicitations to riot printed in the *Amsterdam News* and echoed by black political leaders, there were no riots. Having resisted the siren calls of their politicians, the blacks of Crown Heights and the rest of the city continued to go about their business; in the following weeks, for a demonstration timed to coincide with President Carter's visit to New York, Reverend Daughtry could raise only 150 marchers.

What, then, was the significance of Crown Heights? In timeless fashion, Jews were being accused of buying influence and of wielding power disproportionate to their numbers—power which, it was charged, they used to help themselves and to deprive others. Voting, that sacred affirmation of the political process, became, when exercised by Hasidim, an act of chicanery. The employment of black construction workers—*giving people jobs*—was equated with exploitation. (No leap of imagination is required to know the charge of which the Hasidim would have stood accused had they *not* employed black construction workers.) But of all the representations made against the Hasidim, the most notable was that they were a violent and threatening group, in the face of whose depredations a peaceful black community lived in fear of its very life. The inversion of reality expressed in this idea was reminiscent of nothing so much as the UN's Zionism/racism resolution, with its image of a world held at bay by the existence of a single, democratic country. Indeed, Crown Heights had provided a domestic version of that malignant declaration.

Like any number of incidents before it, like the attacks on the Jewish mayor and his Human Resources commissioner, Crown Heights offered evidence of a new set of attitudes toward Jews. To put it at its most blunt, the public expression of anti-Semitic sentiment, as a means of conveying political antagonism, seems now to have become normal. So much so, that virtually no public notice could be taken of the explicitly anti-Jewish tirades of Crown Heights leaders, the threats to burn down Jewish houses, the enlistments to riot and commit mayhem against Jews. Still, to appreciate the enormity of what was being urged, one need only suppose for a moment a reversal of roles. Suppose an announcement by Jewish civic leaders, for example, that because of the savage crimes of violence perpetrated on the Jewish elderly by blacks, there was to be a boycott of black businesses. Or suppose a warning from Jewish politicians that the militant anti-Israel stance of certain black Congressmen was causing a rising tide of racism among Jews which blacks would do well to appease. It is an impossible supposition. But just such warnings, to Jews, were issued over and over during the Crown Heights affair, and each of them was meant as a reminder of Jewish vulnerability.

IN MID-September, the *Amsterdam News*, which had done so much to foment division, rancor, and hatred of Jews, published an editorial calling for a reconciliation between the black and Jewish communities. With a fine sense of irresponsibility when it came to its own role in this entire sorry history, the paper managed to suggest only that some tragic misunderstanding had occurred between the two communities, which a new infusion of good will would overcome. Perhaps. No doubt some misunderstandings did occur. But no doubt, too, those mainly responsible for them understood perfectly well what they were doing, and were not loath to use the tawdriest of weapons in going about it. That these weapons may now be flaunted openly and with apparent impunity is the real significance of New York's latest black-Jewish conflict.

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Whatever Happened to the Russian Revolution?

Robert V. Daniels

WHY are the Russians still so hard to get along with? Why, faced with the logic of détente and the challenge of human rights, must the Soviet authorities remain so stubborn and intractable, when the revolution that made all other countries and classes their enemies has now receded more than sixty years into history? What is the peculiar legacy of that revolution which still warps the thinking and behavior of the world's geographically largest and potentially strongest power? These are some of the questions that point to a continuing need to reassess the Russian revolution and its results, in the context of both the Russian national past and the pattern of other great revolutionary events.

Authors of moral judgments about revolutionary activity almost always misdirect their ire. The fallacy is to blame revolutions and all their consequences on the conscious acts of revolutionaries. Revolutionaries are held responsible for resorting to violence, for advocating that the end justifies the means, for setting calamitous social conflicts in motion. But condemnations of this sort overlook the fact that great revolutions are not usually started deliberately. "A revolution can be neither made nor stopped," remarked Napoleon after his exile. As historians are by and large aware, revolutions happen because of very complex causal patterns of situational proclivities and triggering mechanisms, or, in other words, a variety of ultimate and immediate causes. Ordinarily, intentional action by revolutionaries does not succeed in launching revolutions at all. It only leads to abortive coups and futile acts of terrorism. In the rare instances where a major revolution is actually initiated by a deliberate coup (for instance, in China in 1911 and in Portugal in 1974), the revolution runs a course that far outdistances the intentions and expectations of its initiators. The famous statement by Friedrich Engels comes to mind: "People who boasted that they had made a revolution have always seen the next day that they had no idea what they were doing. That the revolution *made* did not in the least resemble the one they would have liked to make."

A revolution is not an event, it is a process. It develops over a period of years, through discernible stages. Naturally, different revolutions are not identical, but in one form or another they all display the same characteristic phases. Schematically these phases are: the breakdown of the old regime; the rule of the moderates; the dissolution in whole or in part of the old institutional fabric; the emotional mobilization and polarization of the population; and the struggle of left-wing extremists and right-wing counterrevolutionaries for power. This, of course, is the model made familiar some years ago by the late Crane Brinton in his *Anatomy of Revolution*, drawing in turn on the less well known but pioneering work by Lyford P. Edwards, *The Natural History of Revolution*.

Up to a point the Edwards-Brinton model works very well for a multitude of diverse revolutions. But for the later phases of revolution, after the moment of crisis when revolutionary extremism peaks, I find that the model needs some modification. I have argued elsewhere that the breakdown of authority and the emotional mobilization of the populace during a revolution sooner or later bring the country to a crisis whose outcome is historically indeterminate, that is, where a nation's course may lead to left-wing dictatorship, a right-wing dictatorship, or a precarious moderate balance, and where there is substantial scope for individual action and accidental events in deciding the outcome. Here is the point where deliberate choices by revolutionaries can very definitely become decisive, where moral judgments, within the limits of a crisis situation, can indeed be applied, and where responsibility for the outcome really can be fixed on individual revolutionaries or counterrevolutionaries.

The victory of revolutionary extremism in Russia was the result of just such an indeterminate crisis situation. Bolshevik success was the outcome of personal and unpredictable circumstances, including vigorous leadership, bungling by the counterrevolutionaries, and default by the wrangling parties of the Provisional government, plus sheer accident and good fortune in the events of

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October 1917. To say this is not to deny the role of vast social forces among the emotionally aroused populace—the Petrograd workers, the armed forces, and above all the peasantry. Obviously it was only the process of revolution involving these forces that created so much as a possibility for the extremist seizure of power. Similarly, the fact that Russia was a relatively undeveloped and unreformed country contributed heavily to the extremists' chances for success—Marx to the contrary notwithstanding. Underdevelopment assured a wider response of unsatisfied social elements, of workers without established organizations, of soldiers without the right to be treated as humans, and above all of peasants without land (or without enough land). Modern history shows, by and largé, that revolutions in less developed countries with a great gap between expectations and satisfaction tend to work out to the advantage of the Left. When more developed countries, where the bulk of the population has something to lose, do succumb to revolution, they will usually swing to the Right at the moment of crisis.

There is one aspect of the Russian revolution, shared by other Communist revolutions but nowhere else, that deviates altogether from the pattern of earlier revolutions. This is the ability of the regime created by the revolutionary extremists to keep itself in power indefinitely, and avoid a Thermidorean counter-coup or a Restoration. Of course, it was touch and go for many months in the Russian civil war, but the Bolsheviks adapted quickly enough in the direction of bureaucratic organization and military methods to avoid the decisive defeat that past revolutionary dictatorships had sooner or later suffered. On the other hand, the Bolsheviks did not, as some have suggested, institutionalize "permanent revolution" at this point. The Bolsheviks only managed to maintain the continuity of their regime by a series of flexible responses to events—the party dictatorship in the civil war, the retreat to state capitalism after the crisis of 1921, the Stalin revolution of collectivization and five-year plans resolving the contradictions of the New Economic Policy (NEP). Thanks to this series of responses to practical social and economic challenges, the Soviet regime all along reflected the continued unfolding of the revolutionary process, even though in muted form, without further explicit overturns in the political system.

Thus the NEP of 1921-28 involving the suppression of the idealist ultra-Left organized as the Democratic Centralists and the Workers' Opposition, as well as conceding a partially free economy to the general population, clearly represented the Thermidor of the Russian Revolution. Following the characteristically extremist regime of War Communism (1918-21), the Russian Thermidor was a timely retreat executed by the Communist leadership itself to escape its own overthrow. Seven or eight years later, Russia shifted gears again without any abrupt break in the government, when the NEP yielded to the Stalin revolution. Stalin's enemies were on firm ground when they called the new phase "Bonapartism." A bit more impersonally, the Stalin revolution might be described as the phase of post-revolutionary dictatorship in which revolutionary slogans were synthesized with traditional methods to mobilize new national energy in the pursuit of a dictator's grand ambition.

Russia obviously had no Restoration comparable to the return of Charles II or Louis XVIII. However, a Restoration in some sense might well have been accomplished if Hitler had been more adroit in World War II and Stalin's government had been toppled. But even without this eventuality, developments took place in the era of the Great Purge which in some respects could be regarded as the functional equivalent of a Restoration. These changes included the recrystalization of a permanently hierarchical and authoritarian society with conservative and nationalistic norms in its social and cultural policies, as well as (in the physical sense) the incredible number of old revolutionaries liquidated in the most extreme and still baffling episode of the Purge, the Yezhovshchina.

THE foregoing sketch demonstrates that it is easy to track Soviet developments with the classical model of revolution. On the other hand, the Soviet experience retains an element of distinctiveness that must not be lost sight of. In spite of abrupt changes in policies and personnel and the great discrepancy between the original intentions of the revolutionaries and the outcome that their efforts led to, the continuity of the Communist regime has allowed certain aspects of the early extremist dictatorship to be perpetuated. This is notably the case with the regime's revolutionary ideology and its need to rationalize everything it does in terms of Marxism-Leninism, to justify the outcome of the revolutionary process in terms of the original intent, despite the divergence between the two. Thanks to its political continuity, the Russian revolution has bequeathed a sort of fabricated legitimacy to its heirs. This circumstance is responsible in substantial part for the Soviet government's compulsion to maintain total control over public communication, and the self-defeating cruelties that this commitment has entailed.

Much of the literature comparing and contrasting various revolutions has distinguished two basic kinds. One, up to the French revolution or alternatively up to the Russian, is represented as the political revolution: creative, liberating, good. The other, starting with the French revolution for some authors, with the Russian for others, is the social revolution: destructive, repressive, bad. Though overly simplistic and judgmental, this sort of typology does recognize that different revo-

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lutions represent different demands, different programs, and different motive forces. It recognizes also that there is a certain temporal sequence from one revolution to the next in the development of new aims, as the achievements of one revolution become the starting point for the next.

Revolutions up through the French revolution were primarily religious and political, aiming at freedom of conscience and rights of political participation. In Marxist terminology this is the "bourgeois" revolution, though neither in France nor anywhere else was it the exclusive accomplishment of this class. In mid-19th-century Europe, revolutionary activity began to take on a new dimension of social and economic demands, challenging the economic dominance of the property-owning classes. This, of course, is the movement which Marxism articulated as the "proletarian" revolution—even though its actual accomplishments have no more than in the bourgeois revolutions been the achievement of a single class.

The working-class pressures and socialist ideas involved in a potential revolution against capitalist private property were by no means uniquely Russian, even though Russia was the first place where they succeeded. They were bound to constitute the main thrust of any revolution that might have broken out after the development of capitalist industry and its antithesis in socialism in the 19th century. However, socialist thought in pre-revolutionary Russia was particularly accentuated by the utopianism and extremism of the Russian intelligentsia, some of whom appeared to hate the old native petty bourgeoisie and kulaks as much as they hated the new Western-style bourgeoisie. Liberal capitalism had practically no native defenders.

What was above all unique to Russia in this respect was that it happened to be the scene of the first great successful revolution with a socialist inspiration. It is quite true, as the Soviets say, that the Russian revolution opened a new epoch in history, as the prototype of the economic revolution against the power of private property. This was one kind of power that the revolution clearly did destroy, no matter what abuse of other kinds of power it might in practice condone. Thanks to its total elimination of the capitalists, the Russian revolutionary experience came to represent for the world at large the natural form of the economic revolution that had been brewing for a couple of generations in Europe. Socialism and Russia were identified in many minds, both sympathetic and hostile. Socialism made Russia look good or Russia made socialism look bad, depending on the proclivities of the viewer.

The Bolsheviks assimilated the principle of the anti-capitalist revolution very deeply. Anti-capitalism was reinforced not only by their Marxist heritage but by the long-standing biases of both the intelligentsia and the populace in Russia against the *meshchanstvo*, the trader class. The anti-capitalist principle has been upheld right down to the present day, and upheld with striking fidelity, considering the changeability of almost everything else in Soviet thinking. Private property in the means of production is nonexistent in the Soviet Union. Private employment of one individual by another is "exploitation," an economic crime. Private trade—even so much as purchase and resale of a shirt or a pair of shoes—is "speculation," an equally heinous offense. In this respect, Soviet practice contrasts even with the East European Communist countries where varying degrees of compromise with individual enterprise are observed. In Soviet Russia, anti-capitalism is a moral absolute. It is a fundamental commitment that is stubbornly maintained, not because it is practical for political or developmental reasons or whatever, but in the face of great impracticalities and great sacrifices which have persistently arisen from extreme application of the principle. In pursuit of the anti-capitalist absolute, the Communists have committed great cruelties and jettisoned the heritage of earlier revolutions in human liberation. Anti-capitalism is the one distinctive quality of Russian revolutionary extremism which has survived undiminished with the perpetuation of the revolutionary government, and it has naturally contributed its share toward the compulsive enforcement of revolutionary ideology.

INTERNATIONALLY, anti-capitalism was the principal element in the sensational political impact of the Russian revolution during its early days. In both hemispheres, beneficiaries of the status quo were shocked and panicked over the possible effect of Russian propaganda and example on their own laboring classes. Some countries yielded and allowed non-revolutionary reformers to inoculate their body politic with small doses of welfare-state socialism. Others, in their anxiety to curb the Communist challenge, went the route of coercive counterrevolution—in other words, fascism. But one way or another, the main focus of political debate in the Western world during the third and fourth decades of this century was the basic economic issue posed by the Russian revolution, namely, the issue of curtailing or destroying the power exercised by the owners of property over non-owners.

Some aspects of the Russian revolution in its early days that were equally shocking to the bourgeois world proved to be more ephemeral. There were great hopes for a new era in social relations —equality of the sexes, equality of the skilled and unskilled, and liberation of the individual from all the constraints of traditional institutions of authority ranging from the family to the school and the jail. But these dreams of utopian anarchism were soon dashed in practice, much to the chagrin of protesting groups of idealistic ultra-revolutionaries. They were up against the realities of the workaday world, complicated by Russia's underde-

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velopment, the disruption of war and revolution, and the one overriding ideological commitment of the Communists to root out capitalist enterprise. These priorities made social change in other directions a liability rather than an attraction, and not only for the authorities. What value, after all, is liberated education for the illiterate, or the postcard divorce for the peasant wife? In short, the Communists clung to the economic revolution and forsook the social revolution. Social revolution was left as a lingering ideal to be revived two generations later by the Western New Left and the Cultural Revolution in Communist China.

This rejection of the social revolution by the Communists was more than a pragmatic maneuver. One of the signal aspects of the Stalin revolution—of Soviet Bonapartism—was the systematic repudiation of the social ideals of the liberation and equalization of individuals, given up in practice and very often in words as well. Stalin signaled the new orientation in his famous remark dismissing *"uravnilovka"*—leveling—as un-Marxist, and in his reaffirmation of social controls through school, family, and law. His social conservatism, in fact, was so profound, and so firmly accepted by his surviving lieutenants and heirs, that one is compelled to seek deep cultural factors. This leads naturally to the broader question of whether Russia as a whole was culturally and economically mature enough for the kind of revolution that the Communists attempted.

IT HAS been common ever since 1917 to explain the deficiencies and disappointments of the Russian revolution by pointing out that the revolution was premature for the conditions of the country in which it took place. Up to 1917, Marxists of all stripes concurred in Marx's prophecy of proletarian revolution in the most mature capitalist countries, based on the proposition that "No social order ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have been developed." Mature capitalism would, on the one hand, provide the technological and organizational basis to produce the material abundance required for the reorientation of human attitudes on socialist lines. On the other hand, capitalism would simultaneously assure its own demise thanks to its advanced internal contradictions. This consensus of expectation set the scene for the Russian paradox: a supposedly proletarian revolution occurring and holding out in a country where everyone had acknowledged that the preconditions for rule by the workers were lacking. From this anomaly, according to the social-democratic argument of anti-Communist determinism, there followed all the distortions and injustices of a post-revolutionary society in which the material resources were insufficient to sustain the humanistic-socialist aspirations of the revolution.

Actually, at the moment of seizing power, not even the Bolsheviks professed to be attempting to establish socialism in Russia alone, immediately, under the existing circumstances. Before 1917, both Lenin and Trotsky had tried to rationalize their hopes for an immediate revolutionary role for the Russian working class (as against the Mensheviks' reliance on historic evolution), but Lenin's expectation was only that the workers could somehow lead the bourgeois revolution (according to his theory of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry"), while Trotsky thought they could take temporary advantage of it (according to his theory of "permanent revolution"). The workers' regime would then have to wait for the subsequent internal maturation of industrialism (according to Lenin) or foreign revolutionary aid (according to Trotsky) to support a truly socialist program in Russia.

When the revolutionary opportunity came in 1917, Lenin and Trotsky could both explain it as the result of the war then still going on; they could also agree (until they signed a separate peace with the Germans at Brest-Litovsk) that the war's greatest significance was the chance it gave them to inspire the international revolution in the West. In this respect, in their stress on the war, the Bolshevik leaders were of one mind with the school of thought that saw the Russia of the parliamentary Duma period (1906-17) on the track of liberal capitalist evolution until the war intervened and caused the revolutionary crisis. At that moment, while cautious Bolsheviks like Zinoviev and Kamenev sounded the alarm of prematurity, warning that Russia was unready for socialism, Lenin called for the armed seizure of power on the ground that the war offered a unique chance, never to be repeated, for Russia to strike the first blow for international revolution. Banking on foreign revolutionary support, the Bolsheviks struck successfully for power, and then found themselves stranded on their barren and isolated island of proletarian revolution when the anticipated rescue from abroad failed to materialize.

If the October uprising was indeed a premature proletarian revolution, the fact that it could succeed under the circumstances then prevailing in Russia immediately calls into question the Marxian premise that revolution does not take place until after the full flowering of the old society and the exhaustion of its development possibilities. But a broader look at the major revolutions of history, such as the English and the French, suggests that Russia was not alone in its prematurity.

Revolution does *not* typically come after the complete maturation of a given social system, and certainly not of capitalism. The Marxian assumption that revolution naturally comes only after a given social system has exhausted its potential is not only wrong for the Russian case; it is wrong altogether. Revolution, as has been widely noted, is a natural accompaniment of the modernization

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process, yet it typically occurs not at the end of the process but at an early middle stage, that is, at the time of the most rapid change and the greatest accumulation of tension between a changing society and rigid institutions. Marx to the contrary notwithstanding, revolution is not a clear-cut battle between a rising class and an obsolete class, but a structural crisis in the development process that always involves a mixture of dissatisfied social elements, with the particular mix depending on the times and circumstances.

Societies which have successfully negotiated the passage to mature industrial capitalism without a revolutionary upheaval seem to develop an immunity to violent revolution. Revolutions occur most naturally in any society when they are "premature," both in the incompleteness of the processes of change which bring them on, and in the aspirations which such change arouses. The time when a society is most vulnerable to revolution is the time when rising expectations run farthest ahead of the development of resources to meet those expectations. When a revolutionary breakdown occurs at this point, illusions run riot about the possibility of achieving everyone's aspirations immediately. This is the mood that elevates the revolutionary extremists to power. Unfortunately, reality will not sustain the revolution in this spirit. The new rulers must resort to expediency and coercion, or go down fighting. Faced with such choices, the extremists typically split between the power-oriented and the ideal-oriented elements. Inevitably the idealists fail; only the people who are both ruthless and flexible enough have a chance to keep the idea of revolution going.

> The worst thing that can befall a leader of an extreme party is to be compelled to take over a government in an epoch when the movement is not yet ripe for the domination of the class which he represents. . . . He is compelled to represent not his party or his class, but the class for whose domination the movement is then ripe. In the interests of the movement he is compelled to advance the interests of an alien class, and to feed his own class with phrases and promises. . . .

Engels was warning of an exceptional pitfall; what he seems not to have realized is that the extremists' accession to power before conditions are "ripe" is a natural law of revolution. Hence, the frustration or deception of the revolution's followers is inevitable. The conditions that create the opportunity for revolutionary action preclude the realization of revolutionary aspirations. Conversely, where conditions are sufficient to realize these aspirations, there need be no revolution. Lenin was basically correct in warning, contrary to Marx's expectations, that peaceful progress and economic gains would deaden the revolutionary consciousness of the workers and leave the proletarian revolution as he conceived it forever unachieved.

As things actually turned out, revolution interrupted Russia's development at an early stage of industrialization when the country's economic base was still woefully inadequate to support the distributive justice that socialism was supposed to represent. Instead of sharing the country's meager wealth, the more compelling challenge faced by the revolutionaries was to pick up where capitalism had left off and apply the political and economic institutions of socialism toward the objective of continued rapid economic growth.

This was the case *de facto* from 1918 on, and it garnered Stalin's theoretical blessing as "socialism in one country" from 1924 on. The question then naturally arose in Marxist minds as to whether the post-revolutionary government surviving in Russia could still remain truly a workers' state, when the socioeconomic base for such an advanced superstructure was inadequate. Consequently, was the Soviet government subtly evolving, despite its rhetoric, into something different in terms of its class essence? The potential social degeneration of the Communist dictatorship was, of course, the main underlying theoretical issue in the polemics between the Left opposition and the ruling party leadership during the mid-20's, though the oppositionists hesitated to push the argument to a firm conclusion. In part their problem was the lack of a clear theoretical alternative. If the Soviet Union was not a workers' state, what in fact was it, when it was obviously not capitalist, and what became of the whole Marxist theoretical perspective? The problem has a number of interesting implications.

For many years after the revolution, the premises of Marxism made it difficult for adherents of the doctrine to recognize the emerging realities of Soviet society. Yet there is a basic proposition in the Marxian sociology of revolution that should readily open the door to such awareness. Past revolutions were recognized as the process by which new social elements controlling new means of production—not the downtrodden peasant masses—rose to positions of rule. By extension, the anticipated revolution under industrialism should not be expected to bring the entire working-class majority to power, but rather a new ruling minority of leaders basing themselves on the newest means of production in large-scale industrial and technical organizations. This would obviously be the organizers, managers, and technologists. Such, indeed, were the beneficiaries or creatures of the Russian revolution. The type was not unique to Russia, but because of the revolutionary crisis in Russia they were thrust to power much more abruptly and nakedly than in areas of more gradual development where the appearances of private capitalism survived. Ultimately, the emergence of this "New Class" of bureaucrats in a "managerial revolution" was recognized by a series of neo-Marxist writers, starting with Trotsky's friend Christian Rakovsky in the early 1930's, and later

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popularized by the American ex-Trotskyist James Burnham and the Yugoslav ex-Stalinist Milovan Djilas.

The rule of the New Class in Soviet Russia is a phenomenon that evolved in the course of the revolutionary process. It took shape particularly under Stalin in the phase of post-revolutionary dictatorship, as the heirs of revolutionary extremism sought to address the problems of incomplete industrialization. The New Class subscribed without too much question to the dictatorial methods and the anti-capitalist commitment forged in the revolution, and found its *raison d'être* in the distinctive Soviet approach to development through bureaucratic socialism. In terms of results, the method was no more efficacious than capitalism in its periods of most rapid development (notably in Japan). But the Soviet method of totalitarian socialism was not chosen for the sake of optimum development—it was the product of revolution, a given, originally institutionalized in the Communist party and then applied to hitherto unrecognized or avoided problems of economic development. Soviet totalitarianism was a means, created by Lenin, to achieve the goal of revolution and looking for a new goal to pursue after the flush of revolutionary idealism had faded. Stalin's contribution was to bring together the old means of dictatorship and the new goal of development.

The New Class became the social base of the Russian post-revolutionary dictatorship, Marxism became the ideological "false consciousness" legitimizing these arrangements. And culturally some of the most deeply-rooted and primitive habits of the old regime emerged to be integrated with the system of bureaucratic socialism. Notable among these were the autocratic principle according to which the dominant class served rather than ruled; the hyper-centralized police state; and the obsession with rank and hierarchy in the one exclusive structure of power.

I HAVE noted already that the revolutionary crisis that Russia entered in the early years of the 20th century was similar to earlier revolutionary situations elsewhere; it was a structural crisis in the development process, produced by an impasse between changing society and rigid government. At the same time, this crisis impinged on a unique, specifically Russian, cultural situation. This was the cultural bifurcation of the Russian nation resulting from two centuries of Westernization that was still partial and superficial, affecting mainly the upper and middle classes, the privileged, educated, and property-owning elements. These were the same people against whom the main force of the revolution was directed when it finally broke out. Thus in Russia the political and economic conflict of diverse class elements that characterizes the revolutionary process became in part also a cultural conflict of the non-Westernized (or less Westernized) masses against the Westernized landowning and bourgeois classes, the *burzhui*. This cultural factor undoubtedly contributed to the deep social polarization of the immediate pre-revolutionary years, documented in numerous recent studies. However, the confrontation was not yet clear-cut, since the bulk of the revolutionary leadership, even in the extremist stage of the process, were Westernized intellectuals—whose political success, ironically, struck at the cultural sources of their own identity.

Because of the peculiar cultural stratification of Russian society on the eve of the revolution, and the particularly bitter character of the civil war following the extremist takeover, the net effect of the Russian revolution was to deprive the country of much of its internal cultural resources of a Westernized type. Emigration, if not physical liquidation, of much of the old landowning and bourgeois elements, and elimination of the remainder from positions of influence (unless they were revolutionaries themselves) decimated the Westernized culture-bearing class. The surviving Westernized contingent of Old Bolshevik intellectuals soon found itself under a cloud in the Communist party, and in the Great Purge this element was virtually annihilated. The purge, opening the path of advancement to thousands of young officials newly risen from the ranks of the workers and peasants, represented for the time being the complete triumph of the old Russian cultural substratum over the veneer of Westernization that had superficially characterized Russian society since the 18th century.

What all this implies is that the Russian revolution was more a struggle of cultures than it was of classes. Combining the two concepts, Michal Reiman (formerly of the Institute for the History of Socialism in Prague) has described the Russian revolution as a "plebeian revolution," in which to a unique degree the attitudes and values of the uneducated masses came to prevail in the new society. The concept of a "plebeian revolution," marked by the resurgence of a narrow, nativist mentality at the expense of patrician cosmopolitanism, goes far toward explaining some of the salient characteristics of the post-revolutionary and particularly post-purge regime in Russia, when a youthful new leadership was rapidly promoted from humble origins by way of night schools and correspondence courses, and then proceeded to grow old in office down to the present time.

The post-purge plebeian elite, if that self-contradictory characterization may be permitted, is anti-intellectual, xenophobic, anti-Semitic, and in large measure Great Russian chauvinist. Trained in the narrowly technical side of the Western tradition, the members of this elite are simultaneously pragmatic and dogmatic. As even some Soviet dissenters perceive them, they manifest the habits and prejudices of official Orthodoxy, though in a different language. They have no taste for the free

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play of ideas or art for art's sake; they mouth the philosophy of the Enlightenment and the scientific revolution but reject the spirit of independent critical inquiry that underlay these fundamental achievements of Western culture. They cling to a reincarnated tradition of autocratic authority, claiming omnipotence and omniscience, and practice an elaborate game of bureaucratic rank and precedence, according to their own unwritten laws, though their unpresuming tastes and directness of style make them personally congenial to many Americans who sense in them a kinship of cultural democratization. Implicitly but systematically they evade the social revolution of personal equality among men and women, old and young, expert and non-expert, social success and social victim. They recoil in horror from the equalitarian experiments of their ideological kindred in China. With few exceptions, they exclude their wives from public life, treat their private lives as state secrets, and appear at the opera like a bunch of the boys stopping at a pub. Their revolutionary spirit, insofar as it lingers, appears above all to be the revolution against foreign influence and the sense of foreign superiority. This, perhaps, is what explains the moralistic intensity of the Soviet regime's repudiation of any practices of private capitalism; it is a fundamentally alien mode of life.

IN SUMMING UP the meaning of the Russian revolution, there is no need to belabor the old historiographical problem of the normal and the unique. Like any signal event in human affairs, the Russian revolution had features and qualities in common with other events —enough, at least, to justify the use of the word revolution as a generic term. At the same time, it was distinguished by the specific features of time and place and the particular mix of its elements. All in all, there has never been anything quite like it.

Russia obviously exemplified the successive phases of the revolutionary process, but it was the first case in which the organization and ideology set up in power by the revolutionary extremists persisted indefinitely. The phase of post-revolutionary dictatorship was thereby intensified and perpetuated in a form benefiting from contemporary technology which we recognize as totalitarianism. The revolutionary extremists were anti-capitalist and anti-foreign, two emotions that were mutually reinforcing in Russia, and they implanted these attitudes in the new regime while shattering Russia's Westernized social veneer to the advantage of ruder elements from below. The latter, meanwhile, took the shape of a New Class of stratified bureaucrats, mobilized to address the problems of a typically premature revolution, namely, the need to continue economic development by means other than the repudiated system of capitalism, and the need to justify this effort and their own privileged existence in terms of a utopia that could never be realized under the conditions that brought the revolution about. Finally, the catalyst to effect this combination of political instruments and social forces was furnished by the ambition and political acumen of one individual, Joseph Stalin, whose legacy lives on in the basic structure and values of the post-revolutionary society over which he once presided.

One wonders, in the last analysis, what really distinguishes the revolutionary outcome from more traditional economic systems. Under capitalism, as they say in Eastern Europe, you have the exploitation of man by man. Under Communism, it's the other way around.

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The Good Neighbor Policy of Scott Zuckerman

A Story

John Krich

We flew out to Albuquerque and found Scott's sister's Dodge Dart waiting in the airport lot. I never figured out how it came to be there, but the car wasn't too bad for a two-door with pushbutton transmission. We made it the rest of the way West, with only one overheat, going over the Raton Pass. Scott drove the thing fast enough for overheating—he drove as if we were getting away from something fast. We called it New York, but knew it as the past. We wanted to have no alternatives, to be choiceless and stuck like everybody else. But we weren't everybody else. We had an obligation to ride. Before we started the trip, we'd even claimed we were looking for roots, though we both knew the most rooted animal of all was the one with his foot in a trap. What did Eugene V. Debs say? No man is rootless until all men are rootless? We didn't really know what he said, but whatever it was, that was what we believed.

Scott rolled down his window for the first time and took a deep, demonic breath, as though to say all such ruminations were now behind us. He took in the air of the open road and grinned at me, confiding, "This is better than nitrous oxide!"

I nodded. We were thankful for this country in which we could roam, even though we had done so little to conquer it. We weren't thankful the way the National Parks Service might have wanted us to be, and as we drove, we thought often of the Indians, the true caretakers—you could always tell you were on a reservation when even the sage, even the succulents, were dying. Scott, twirling his Zapata mustache in his fingers, pushed on unperturbed. There was magic to this empty place that was ours to be empty in. It was a mercantilist sleight-of-hand, these states united! Tutored and prepped by Eastern cities that huddled together and smelled of places farther eastward, Scott and I had the whole West to ourselves. We had so many miles in which to say, to propose, to offer that we were not strangers, that we were of the same people.

But the open road could fool you. The people, what few of them were around, didn't know they were part of some experiment. For a while, I didn't know I was part of one myself.

Lesson number one: Scott loved the gas station. It wasn't just there for refueling.

"Howdy there!" he cried out at a beat-up Whiting Brothers, springing from his seat and the quiet obscurity he'd hugged for a hundred miles. "This baby sure would appreciate some of your ethyl in its belly."

I cringed. Scott hadn't done his drawl for me before.

"That ethyl's a good gal," the astonished attendant responded grudgingly.

"Nice weather we got," Scott continued, suddenly winking at me, telling me to watch. He'd been cross-country before. He was going to assuage the local populace. I just wanted the sandy-haired old man in coveralls to fill up our tank.

"Kind of cool for this time of year," the pump man opined.

"That right?" Scott asked, answering, beginning to nudge a new twang into his voice. "Well, we're coming up on some mountains, aren't we?"

"That you are, mister."

"I feel at ease up in the mountains." Scott had not been in them yet. "Sure wish I lived out here. You like it, living here?"

"We take our chances," the attendant told him, wiping the windshield.

Scott stumbled a moment. He acted as if each of them must be co-authors of the *Farmers' Almanac*. If no folksy wisdom was ensuing, Scott would provide it himself.

"Chance has a mighty close kinship to breathing free, though, don't it?" he tried.

Leaving his man baffled, Scott went off to find the room of rest.

"The key's hanging in the office," the attendant called.

"Thank you kindly," Scott answered, bouncing off in his blue jeans (straight cut). "Of course, a man could use the side of the road out here."

Perhaps the old man saw me squirm in my seat after that one. We weren't structural anthropologists paddling down the Amazon. We were between Agua Fria and Eagle Nest on Route 64. Scott vanished for a time. It wasn't until the end of our journey that I learned he took a minute on

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each visit to the can to do some special Yoga exercises a New York swami had taught him to relieve driver's cramp. Scott never told me how to do them, but then he never let me drive, either.

"Thank you kindly," he repeated to the attendant, returning the key to its spot beside the road maps in the office.

"Clean enough for you?" the old man asked.

"Clean as Billy Graham's," Scott tried once more. I never knew where he got his material.

"That'll be eight bucks even," he was told.

"It sure was a thirsty mother, wasn't it?"

"Yup, it was dry down deep."

Scott loved it, grinning by the car with his hand on the door handle, frozen like a nervous suitor. I waited, and so did the old man.

"You think we'll have a clear one up where we're headed?" Scott began all over again.

"I don't know, mister." The sandy-haired man was getting impatient. "I'm not the weather bureau."

"Well, thank you kindly. It was sure pleasant passing through," Scott eulogized, at last rejoining me.

The man in coveralls waved us off. We'd been stopped for half an hour. I didn't dare calculate how many hours this gas station ritual would add to our trip. You took your chances with traveling partners—that was one thing about which I could manage to be fatalistic. But Scott had acted as if he was a vacuum-cleaner salesman hard-up for chatter, and I wondered for the first of many times what that said about me. It was true that we'd never been the best of pals back in the city, but we'd been congenial, conversational—even comrades. We'd been to the movies together—never a Western—and we'd been in demonstrations side by side. There wasn't much more two men could do together, was there?

I got to thinking maybe he'd wanted me on this ramble just to share expenses. He was quickly becoming as quiet as the road with me. I was what was behind him. He was going to save his speech for the natives.

"I got a joke for you," I told him, hoping to get in the spirit. Scott didn't even turn toward me. "Why did it take the Polack two months to drive across the country?"

"I don't know. Why?"

"Every time he saw a gas station with a sign that said, 'Clean Toilet,' that's exactly what he did."

Scott didn't laugh. I'd hardly expected him to laugh, but after the talkative state he'd just been in, I did expect some answer. I glanced over at silent Scott behind the wheel, and thought about his family's house where I'd come to pick him up on the way to JFK. It was a brownstone off Park Avenue, but I never got past the first landing. Scott was all set to leave and he obviously didn't want me to case the rest of his crib. But I'd seen it: a bashful little palace behind him, the unused white piano, the shelves bulging with hundred-dollar art books, the high ceilings from which were hung the finest Persian tapestries. Maybe you couldn't call it a palace—Jews lived in the back of candy stores, didn't they? But it sure was some candy his folks were selling. And though Scott never changed from his one denim outfit and cowboy heels, and though the places in which I'd seen him operate were always properly mussed by the sloppy wind of commitment we shared, everything I found queer about Scott would be explained by that brownstone. That was why he had to be some sort of "oral historian," and why he couldn't be just a bum.

Maybe Scott took my joke as some comment on his performance. He didn't say a word until we needed to fill up again. But the first thing he did was repeat my two-liner to the Texaco man. Perhaps he should have checked if the guy who was listening was Polish, but we were in the midst of Zuñi country, and those tribes didn't do much intermarrying. Again, Scott stalled at the service station, putting us into his peculiar time-warp as he searched for a petrolated Middle Earth on top of the planet. Once he talked for an hour about design problems in different varieties of gas caps. Another time, he unexpectedly put a wheel alignment on the agenda. (I don't care who invented the wheel. But who invented the alignment?) When Scott ran out of inspiration, he talked about cloud formations. One reminded a station owner of liberty bells, another was reminded of lassos and lariats. At each stop, too, I asked if I might drive.

Finally, Scott muttered, "You're riding shotgun on this buggy."

The time Scott spent jabbering was made up by the time we saved missing meals. That was another item he didn't discuss with me, along with hitchhikers. He stopped for them dutifully and they always carried him off on some good-will, or ill-will, mission. A thin, sour-looking Southerner had stood in the sun so long before Scott rescued him the creases around his eyes had been left white. It looked like he was squinting even when he wasn't. The dog that traveled with him seemed to be squinting, too. The man gave us a long, forlorn saga about his heap having broken down while he was on his way back to his first wife in Tennessee, having left his second wife and maybe his first job back on the West Coast. The best we could do for him was retrace our steps for a few miles, scavenging back roads in search of a grocery that might sell dog food. But not our lunch.

A second hitchhiker, a leather craftsman who dressed like a walking saddle, distracted Scott from snacking by asking for a ride to his communal farm, up a long path not even the Romans would have called a road. The Dart didn't like it, but Scott did. When this rawhide Gypsy described

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a series of random sniper attacks to which his household had been subjected as a welcome from its Chicano neighbors, Scott took the bumpy road with less caution, asked more questions, couldn't wait to be involved. Luckily, the hippie didn't ask us to stay the night, though I could have gone for a few of his home-grown alfalfa sprouts. The talk of shootings only seemed to make Scott more at ease. Each sad, forlorn tale buoyed him, reminded him of how far he was from the Ethical Culture Society. His compassion, too, was far gone. The stories of the road were just slow, easy songs to him. The chords were easy and he could strum, strum, strum.

Before Denver, a young recruit hopped in back. His regulation haircut made him look too young to know what he was fighting for or against. He was on his way home from boot camp, carrying a curious, thickly covered attaché case. A half-hour down the Interstate, he told us his case contained the disassembled steel of a long-range rifle. He wasn't taking any chances. Talk at the camp had convinced him that Angela Davis was at the head of a "nigger army" in the California desert. They were gunning for whites, he told us. Anything blue-eyed that moves.

The hitchhiker didn't notice that Scott and I were not blue-eyed. Scott played along with him. Converting the rider's conversation to peacetime uses, he quickly saw the artillery as just another bit of Americana. Gruesomeness was the ticket. As long as our strangers remained strange, Scott was happy. He knew America was driving everybody crazy—I knew he knew that. But Scott had learned that in the context of leaden political debates. "Out here," everything was believable because it was make-believe. And he believed.

We hit Boulder just about the time they turn on the street lights. It could have been dinnertime, too. But Scott stopped again for an outstretched arm.

"Coming to Buddha's birthday party?" a young girl drowning in patchouli oil asked us.

"How old is he?" Scott asked.

"Gee, I dunno," the girl answered with the seriousness of a student failing to respond to her teacher's call. "We're boogying on the mountain. Why don't you come on up?"

"We've been traveling all day."

"There'll be lots of dope going 'round. I could sure use the ride, too."

"Okay, let's go see Buddha," said Scott Zuckerman. I was visualizing the birthday cake and wondering who got the first slice.

"You're not hungry, are you? I could show ya this burger stop on the way if you're hungry."

"No, no. We're not hungry," Scott told her without consulting me.

The party was being thrown by the local free press at a little amphitheater carved from the igneous rock of that first crest of the Rocky Mountains that rise like a boil behind Boulder. A band played shoestring blues to the four/four of the crickets and the more orchestrated in-fighting of the fir forests. Flocks of Hare Krishna devotees danced through the 4-H picnic sites, bells on their ankles, barefoot across the pine trails, handing out sticks of incense that stank worse than any fresh air. Beaded high-schoolers, sneaking away from home for the night, passed joints in circles. Scott was ecstatic. We were West. You made your own culture here and none of it was handed down. If the people sometimes appeared as bent and broken as crushed twigs, they were only beautifying nature's haphazard landscape. Scott was busy losing his past, so I lost him for a spell. I had no energy to follow him around through the godhead's fifty closest friends and relatives in Colorado.

The people we bused back down the hill offered us a place to stay. It wasn't much, just a fourteen-room, four-story shack near the edge of town. At last, we got grub—peanut-butter-and-celery sandwiches—prepared for us in a kitchen with each of its walls, each shelf, each cabinet painted a different shade of iridescence by a set of former occupants. While we chomped, our hosts informed us that the whole household was only recently released from jail, and from what we could see, they seemed to be working their way toward another bust. The living room was a clearinghouse. We barely had room to spread our new, shiny bedrolls between the assorted parcels of arriving sample kilos. It had been a long day, but Scott wasn't through. I waited for him to join me in the common room, but soon realized his rapping had gotten him a bed. The meek shall inherit the floor.

Scott woke me early. We had to get over the Rockies. It was too cold for hitchhikers, so we climbed to the timberline in silence. Surrounded by bumpers of ice, the Dart neared an embolism. The route was still closed by its own winter, though the month was merry May. A Ranger waited in his car at the blockade, and Scott made sure our scaling hadn't been in vain. While I shivered in the front seat, he ambled over to the Ranger.

"Nature doesn't always cooperate with the tourist season, sonny," the deputy in mittens told him, all too obliged. "You'll have to backtrack, wind your way through the silver-lode country."

"That's a load I can carry," Scott punned at fourteen thousand feet.

"It's sure a peaceful morning," the appleseed answered.

"I bet you've known a few mornings like this," Scott went on, collecting his oral history.

"That I have, that I have," the Ranger mused while I caught double pneumonia. "I've been on this job for twenty years." At least, this guy had an excuse for scrounging conversations. "You see, God lost His shoe somewhere up in this country," the Ranger went on without prompting. "And I've spent my whole life looking for it."

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Scott, and the topography, had reached their zenith. Surely there was a place for this in the *Guinness Book of Records*. World's Smallest Remark at Highest Altitude. World's Most Christian Statement. Most Meaningless Significant Comment Ever Made. World's Coldest Socratic Dialogue. Most Hours Discussing the Weather.

WHERE the barefoot (or one-footed?) Deity let us, we crossed the Great Divide. The mountains were extinguished in a hundred shanty towns, now tourist towns, with boardwalks and bingo parlors rebuilt in fiberglass. By late afternoon, all we had to make our silent homage to were the broad, sun-damaged valleys flushed away from the rock by the Red River. Scott stopped for a former shot-putter wearing a sweatshirt that read "S.M.U. Track." He worked tidying up the campgrounds at the river's national monument, and that was soon where we were headed.

"Just back from town. Made me a poontang run. Mind if we slow it down a moment for some sody pop?"

For some reason, he liked us. He was a Texan. You could tell by the way he liked us *ipso facto*. Texans often liked you because they didn't want to know you. And they kept talking.

"You kiddies have sure been a pail of help to me. Say, this buddy o'mine's got a l'il ol' airplane, just a four-seater, over at the airfield in the park. What say we take a sunset fly?"

"Fly over the river?"

"It's the best way to see those dirty canyons, boy. It's the only way to do it. The class way."

"You know how to pilot a plane?"

"You think I'd get my delicate little ego an' all up in the air if I didnt?"

"You're on, boy," granted Scott Z., slapping his knee while he drove.

"Let's do it."

His "let's" included me, and I was deathly afraid of heights. I don't know why I didn't speak up. Scott mesmerized me so, his command seemed so inalienable. He was my fate, except I didn't believe in such a thing. But I knew the Texan didn't want to kill us. If he hadn't done it when Scotty called him "boy," then the moment had probably passed.

AT THE trading post of the ragged, private landing strip, the Texan got a six-pack of Coors before we took off. Sitting at the controls of the plane, he popped open a beer and held it between his legs. He sipped it while we rose like trapped gas, occasionally spinning the rinky-dink wheel. The plane bounced up and up. Scott was strapped in beside the pilot. He twirled his black mustache. It had never looked villainous to me until just after take-off. I was glad I couldn't see too much of him from my baby seat in the back. I tried to look only at my own lap.

"Wahoo. Listen to this machine. It's built like Raquel Welch."

"Your friend owns it?"

"The government owns it, man. Uncle Sam's here to please. We just made some keys. Look yonder, down there—that's one of the big bends, used to be some formidable pow-wows down there before the *federales* made all this their playground."

"What year was that now?" Scott, the roving press conference.

"Shoot, I couldn't tell you. Before you were a glint in your old man's balls, that's for certain."

The Texan opened another beer, swinging his controls sharp to the right, the plane dipping, leaning to follow the river downstream. I thought I might be sick. The water winked at me through my very own porthole. The last sunlight hit its exposed, broad currents. The earth got red and smoky close to the river. Beyond that, this was just one more bit of one more green valley, uncultivated through oversight. The anonymity was depressing, without unity. It made me feel it wasn't really worth it to have come here from anywhere else. Especially with Scott. Especially *par avion*. All of a sudden the river got so close it wasn't winking. It was dilated and uncomfortable, bloodshot and expectant. It wanted us to take the plunge. Campers hammering spikes for tents scurried away to the side of our glued-on wings.

"Wahoo. That's the way to do it. The river's warm as a horny squaw once you snuggle up against it. Sometimes we take this rattler up at night an' strafe all those young pioneers. Once we dishonored some ladies right here in the cockpit. You fellas had enough?"

"Whenever you're ready," Scott conceded.

"I'm fit and ready at all times, boys. I'll let you city fellas down easy."

But he didn't do it like the big boys in the navy blue caps. He just let the rubber beneath us take care of any rough angles. We skidded to a stop.

"You're a true gentleman," said Scott, once grounded, searching for the proper form of address and coming up empty-handed. "How can we repay you?"

"I don't want all your money—just 99 per cent," the pilot frightened Scott. "There's no payment necessary for a country boy."

The Texan saw that I was pleased to be on the ground and winked at me.

"I could show you kids a fine place to set out for the night," he continued his unremitting generosity. "You can hear the coyotes call, and all that horseshit."

"No, no that's not what we want," Scott assured him, using the royal "we." "Show us the stomping ground, we've got a hankering to live us some more true tales. We want some action."

"I read you, skipper," the Texan saluted. He pointed toward a flat lot on a bluff above the river. He shook our hands. "You'all *maintain* now, you hear? That's the important thing."

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THE Texan spoke out of habit, but maybe he meant it as a warning. The "action" seemed to come from the local townies, who circled the field continuously in unmuffled Corvettes, throwing hollers and bottles toward the campground. Judging by the patterns and subdivisions of the down-and-nylon city, the overnight guests had decided there was safety in numbers. But Scott led me away from the herd. His eye had been caught by some abandoned ovens, two-story stone beehives, old charcoal burners still standing at the edge of the exposed site.

"Shelter!" cried Lewis to Clark. "I can't imagine why these haven't been claimed."

I could. They were frightening. They were set off from the main body of tents, closest to the road the yokels used, and they looked like ancient burial chambers of some thoroughly incinerated people. Inside the rounded door in which the unburned wood had once been shoved, things got worse. The ground was damp and smelled as though it were in a state of permanent chemical reaction. A small opening at the top of the furnace allowed some air in, but little out. What had happened to the broad Western sky under which we were supposed to doze and hear "true tales"? I followed Scott but not his logic. Of course, he never made claims to consistency. He wasn't curious about the heckling, honking natives here. He was oblivious, even to himself. After we'd prepared our sleeping bags for a sleepless night, Scott sat cross-legged outside the beehives and I joined him, detecting some slack, a softening.

Emboldened, I told him of my idea for a new radio station, with vast wattage, its transmitters beaming out from the middle of the wide prairies, from the deserts, from nowhere, a station for ramblers. Why should people going across the country have to hear only syndicated sermons and rewarmed old love songs? Here was a great chance for organizing, for hitting people where they were, or where they passed. Scott played with the fringes of his mustache and cautioned me. The station would have to be indigenous. It would have to be more than the city taking over the countryside. It would have to be what people wanted—only somehow better.

Neither of us knew what that might entail, so we looked at the stars—from soot unbound—and played a game. We didn't know the old names for the constellations, so we made up new names. Scott saw a radiator grill traced by pale green, middle-distance stars and called it "Edsel." I saw a long cigar with a burning tip of ash that really seemed bright. It was "Fidel." Scott insisted I rename it "Fidelitas." He delineated a strong, brave figure of a woman I couldn't find, because he wanted to name something "Sojourner." I followed with a beer can flung across galaxies: "Astral Bilge." Scott ended things by spotting a hammer and sickle. There were lots of hammers with or without sickles, once you looked for them.

Scott retreated abruptly into the cave. Mosquitoes drove me into joining him. Our little house protected us from fresh air, but sounds of the neighborhood filtered in. I heard catcalls and screams and hoots and the baying of drunken werewolves, trying not to listen all the while. Everything would be all right, I moaned to myself, once we got to California. California was New York spread out. California was New York gone soft sell. Get me to Californ', Scott. I prayed for it all night. I prayed to find people who didn't just joke about who they were, but dreamed about who they weren't. Don't forget all of them, Scotty. Don't forget you're a Jew, either. You know how to value words that aren't spoken at gas stations, words that must be written down.

BEFORE California, there was Utah and its desert of dried tears. Then came the agonizing pause called Nevada. Five hours from one neon boot-in-the-air to the next, all of them eager to kick you along. Between hitching posts, storms collided with us. Dust surrounded the Dodge in a velveteen, brown envelope so that we could barely breathe, and saw nothing but the storm itself. Scott went on whistling "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry," off-key at that, but he jiggled the wheel from side to side like a maniac. When a natural broom swept our vision clean, we found ourselves on the wrong side of a four-lane highway.

Hailstones followed, thunking on the roof of the Dart like plaque picked from God's hard teeth—lucky we never ran into His shoe or His foot—followed by fog, lightning, and a cleansing rain. But Scott still would not yield the wheel. He could have gone into a coma and my driving permit still would not have been valid in his unincorporated territory. It wasn't on the barricades that you found out how far a person trusted you. No, you found it out in the front seat of a Dodge Dart. The hailstones got even bigger in the stories Scott told at each successive gas station we stopped at down the line.

In Reno, he finally acknowledged the need for sustenance. Without consulting me, he pulled into a drive-in coffee shop. Scott hadn't stopped primarily to eat, however, but to gamble on the one-armed bandits in the lobby. Of course, the compliant machines filled his grubby paws with money. His infatuation with his own mustache reaching epic proportions, Scott fondled it as he fondled the slots. When I finally got him to the table, he snowed a chunky, mousy waitress into a flirtation. I didn't think anything of it when he got her blushing while she wrote our orders onto a pad—his damn small talk usually had that effect. But the waitress, brown-haired and adolescent, kept returning again and again about our eats, giggling at Scott's smoothness, almost asking with her big weary eyes to be swept off by him—and set down lord-knows-where.

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There was an awkward moment while the waitress took our check at the front register. The poor thing was shaking. She forgot to add the tax. More than once, she asked, "Where you boys headed?" or, "Is there anything else I can do?" She was waiting for Scott to say, "Come to the big city with me," or at least, "What time do you get off work?" Her knees knocked and knotted-up her net hose. With his dark eyebrows, his walrus 'stache, Scott must have looked like a sheik to her. But all he asked was, "Whereabouts can a man find himself a toothpick?"

He didn't even leave her a tip. I had to slip her a dollar at the cash register. I felt like Scott's pimp. The sight of money, I'd come to notice, cheapened Scott's new civility. He tipped waitresses by talking to them. These people were not fabled workers to him. Their job, if they had any, was small-talking with him, and he acted as though their greatest earthly reward was to be a part of his froth of speech. Scott was a revolutionary all right, but he'd managed to tailor an ideology to fit his own temperament. For all his forced charm, he did not believe in individual gestures. Duty to the cause of the revolution was something to be punched in and out of. Before or afterward, you looked out for yourself as best you could and you were a fool if you didn't—with the possible exception of skipping food when a Spartan self-image was required. If he could pull it off, Scott would screw the men and women he encountered out of every penny right up until the last second when all that soft chatter gave way to the uprising of the downtrodden. Then, he'd join them all in the trenches and hope nobody recognized him.

Over the Donner Pass, where I could have cannibalized Scott with ease, down into California's golden valleys, I saw us as pioneers. Now I knew why the frontier looked so good. This wasn't the promised land. This was the place you finally got a few days to be apart from your wagonmaster, from your mate, from all the annoyances of the long crossing. We were going to do the same. Scott spotted one last hitchhiker and slowed.

"We must be going the wrong way for him," I groaned. A tall transient with a harelip, wearing stiletto boots and earrings, was skipping over.

"Thanks muchly." He climbed in back. "I was waiting two hours, kittens. Can you imagine? But it was a spiritually high place to wait."

A few miles along, he volunteered, "I used to live in New York. I was brought up there, but I try not to remember it, ya know?"

"So you're a Californian now?"

He answered by sneering, "I can always tell when I'm with *those* people."

"Which people are those, pray tell?"

"It's all the Jews. I'm glad my family got me away from those people, with their lox and bagels and 'You wanna be a doctah?' and 'You wanna marry my daughter?' "

"I think you have to be over sixty to really be Jewish," Scott teased him, warning him with a grace that astonished me. "My old man is just starting to work at it."

"Oh, I know all that," the apparition in the back exhaled. "You see, we're Jewish, too." (No wonder the speech had been so inaccurate.) "I mean, we were. I mean, my family never made me do any of those Jewish things. Do you know what I mean?"

I looked over at Scott and saw, for the first time, that he was tired of knowing what people meant. "You know," he tried one more time in his hillbilly voice, "I reckon part of being Jewish is not doing those Jewish things."

"Yeah, but you've got to watch out. They're all a bunch of money-grubbers. They're all crazy back there. I was just glad to get away from them when I could."

We were glad to get away from him when we could.

"Stay away from those New Yorkers!" Scott called to him when we dropped him off in Berkeley.

We laughed together for the first time in eleven states. Scott was getting back his old voice. He was growing uncomfortable again, and that suddenly made him amiable. We got to talking about casualties, a common phrase around that time. Casualty implied that something intact had been damaged, something of value, is that right, Scott? There sure had been a lot of casualties, he agreed, but the times weren't really so bad. That's it, I came back, it's conceit, the conceit of this generation, of our generation. Right, Scott? This casualty stuff was the latest metaphor for just getting older. Nothing was any worse than it ever had been, I figured, except that there was more of it. I mean, it was an age of duplication. Right, Scott? Scott said there weren't any new problems, it was just that the old ones had been xeroxed a few times too many. There were copies of everything lying around in big piles, so that getting through it had nothing to do with imagination any more, it just had to do with proper paperwork, I offered. Scott said there sure seemed to be a lot of mental illness going around, and he hoped it wasn't catching.

Still, he couldn't help pulling into a last coffee shop. This time our waitress wore a nameplate that read, "Dottie." Then, in smaller lettering, "Arkansas."

"Is Arkansas your family name?" Scott asked her.

"No," our waitress blushed. "It's where I come from." Nobody in California ever came from California. It was sinister. "You gentlemen having coffee?"

"You betcha," said Scott for the both of us. "And make mine two bullseyes, wheat toast, please."

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"I'll take a cheese omelet," I told her, returning a menu the size of a Rand McNally atlas.

Dottie from Arkansas brought us some mugs. Before we'd even tinted their contents with cow juice or sucrose, some wide, indeterminately young woman with a curious, chopped-up pageboy and a face that seemed to have been rubbed red by some devilish instrument, sauntered down the row of polished booths toward us. She stopped dead in her tracks beside us.

I tried to anticipate what sort of creed she might be about to sell, when her eyes hit mine like a tow truck. She seemed about to tell me to shove over so she could sit beside me and I did, involuntarily, perhaps sensing that Scotty boy was about to be put to his sternest test.

She sat down. "Oh, hi!" she chirped at us both. Then, eyeing me and pressing her fat denim thighs against my somewhat leaner ones, "I like your pants!"

"Thanks."

"I like what's inside 'em even more."

Scott almost jetted his java through his nostrils. I glared at him, pleading for the aid of his overexercised talents. My cheese omelet arrived like an unwanted child.

"I got ripped off last night," our new friend chatted. "Yeah, I got ripped off." She was her own audience and laughed. Why did she need us? "I only got a dollar. That's great, isn't it?"

She turned to me. I couldn't tell if her peepers were on my trunk, or my plate.

"I always get mixed up with young guys. That's the trouble. Sixteen, seventeen, these street kids, filthy types, they don't know how to treat a girl at all." Giggle. "I was in bed with two of 'em. I didn't sleep last night. I mean, they kept attacking me all night. All I wanted was some sleep. But these two guys kept bothering me. You know what it's like?"

"No, I never got attacked by two guys," quipped Scott.

"Oh. Hey, there goes another young one. Almost as cute as you two. But I'm broke. I mean, what am I gonna do?" Processed cheese oozed untouched on my plate.

"Time to call the folks."

"I don't have no folks—well, I do. But I don't." Giggle. "I mean, that's not what I want. I want sympathetic friends, ya know? Good vibrations. All that shit. But everyone's so hostile, they're all trying to rip me off. They stole my daughter, ya know. They took her away from me. I mean, all this bad shit started happening to me one day, the voices warned me about the bad shit, and now it's happening to everyone. It's coming down on the whole world. Have you noticed?"

Even Scott needed a moment to gather his thoughts. We were quickly seeing that this was no run-of-the mill nymphomaniac. The front of her coveralls was smeared with a set of melting stains, maybe vaseline. She had the same ointment around her lips and all over her chubby arms which poked through the cut-off, thread-fringed openings of her sweatshirt. Then I saw the scabs. They were on her elbow, on the table, too close to my whipped omelet as it lay waiting in its pool of lard.

"I got this itching," she confessed as we fell silent, or jumped silent. "This terrible itching. . . ." She shoved her arms closer to the food. "I got the scabies."

"Is that a kind of Marine?" Scott asked.

"It's these little animals, all these mites, like the crabs, ya know. You get 'em from sleeping around." Giggle. "I got 'em in jail once. They threw me in there for carryin' a cough drop. Can you handle that? Took 'em three weeks to analyze it in their labs, then they let me out."

"Why didn't you get a lawyer?" fearless Scott essayed once more.

"I didn't remember about a lawyer."

Dottie came back and our friend settled in by ordering a coffee. Scott started squirming like a worm about to be set for bait.

"Amazing," our friend went on, "amazing. Did you hear them?"

"Hear who?"

"The voices. The next booth, they're mumbling my name, hear them? Now they're mumbling incoherently, hear it? Ask them about it later and they'll claim it never happened." Giggle. "Lapses in memory, incoherent speech patterns—it's getting pretty bad, isn't it? I mean, people are getting pretty damn disabled. Isn't that the way you see it?"

Scott was speechless. He turned away uncomfortably so I would not see his lapse.

"It's a state of emergency," she started up again. "I knew there was some bad shit coming, I mean, I thought I was the only one with the equipment."

"Which equipment?" Scott asked, encouraging himself as much as her. "Is it something like *UHF*?"

"Well, the way I see it, see, is that I've got this extra attachment. It isn't on standard models, this equipment, so that I can receive these messages. They're radio waves, I guess. Also, I can transmit them. I can make people say the oddest things, then make them forget they ever said them. . . ."

She kept pressing her thighs against me and I still had not tasted my omelet.

"I mean, it's got to be a state of emergency. Think of all the people who will die in California today—of all the people dying everywhere. And I don't care, do I? And you don't care, do you?"

THE worst thing about our new friend was that she was starting to make some sense. People were disabled. But the state of emergency was hers and she was in misery. You didn't want to prolong it, or to prolong your having to watch it. I was ready to concede my break-

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fast to her, to flee her, but it was Scott who would have to make the move. I had to make him admit defeat. If there really was such a thing as neurosis, and if being neurotic meant not being aware that you were, and if we could apply that dictum to whole segments of the populace, then Scott had been wrong. We'd been headed in the wrong direction. Or at least, we hadn't been headed in the right one. It was our friend who was right again. Everyone in California did seem to be dying. And they were dying from their own self-proclaimed states of sunny health.

"Do you go to school?" Scott asked her.

"Yeah, of course, I'm in school all the time," she answered. "See my notebook."

She pulled a mass of dog-eared (as in mad dog) pages from the back of her blue jeans.

"You see. I write every day. I write down all the things that people do to me. I beam in, I report all the abnormalities."

"Abnormalities?"

"Yes, we must report our abnormalities to the equipment, to the control. You think that's a good idea?"

"Which school is it you go to?"

"How many schools are there in Berkeley?"

"Well, there's the school for the deaf and dumb," Scott couldn't resist answering.

Cheerful Scott, oral historian, had gone through many changes.

She started scratching harder and her pussed-over elbow landed in my hash browns. That was the ball game.

"You want the rest of this?" I offered her with overwhelming charity.

"Oh, yeah. Gee, thanks. You gonna eat this toast here?"

"No, go ahead."

"I'm afraid we've got to be getting our show on the road," Scott announced, slipping out of the booth in the time it took her to glance down at our leftovers.

"Gee, now. Where ya going? You're not going to attack me? All the young ones attack me, ya know."

The toast held her attention just long enough to cover me.

"Wait up. Where ya going?"

"Away." It was Scott. "Far away. Home."

She returned to the omelet and her parasites and her scattered papers.

I DIDN'T question Scott or his statement that we were on our way back home. How could he last long out here? The Hell's Angels who pumped gas wouldn't even hum his way. Nobody would be impressed that he'd learned to roll his own cigarettes, or that he'd bought one of those thin, cord neckties with a turquoise clip or pecan divinities from Stuckey's or pointy-toed Frye Boots or a case of Dr. Pepper. This was the West, too, but Scott wanted a West that was one step ahead of him only by being a West that was one step behind. I had Scott's secret, but it was safe with me. In the future, I'd choose my traveling partner more carefully, but our ride back home would be just fine. With Scott at the wheel, at least I knew what to expect.

Reaching the car, trying like Orpheus not to look back over my shoulder, I asked Scott, "Is she really gone?"

"She's off like a dirty shirt," he beamed. Scott Zuckerman, lexicographer. "Do you like that one?"

"Naw," I told him. "It stinks."

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A Tale of Two Wastes

Bernard L. Cohen

When fuels are burned to produce energy, the materials do not simply disappear—after all, matter can neither be created nor destroyed—but rather are converted into other forms, which are called wastes. This is true whether we burn coal in chemical reactions or uranium in nuclear reactions, the two processes which represent our only present major options for making electricity. How much waste is produced by a typical plant of each type (assuming each generates the same amount of electricity), and what hazards does each create?

The principal waste from the burning of coal is carbon dioxide, produced at a rate of 500 pounds per second. This is not ordinarily a dangerous gas, but there is serious concern that the tremendous amounts of it now being discharged into the air may be changing the world's climate and thereby creating hosts of severe ecological problems.

As for the really dangerous gases that are emitted when coal is burned, the most important are compounds of sulfur. A ton of these compounds is discharged every five minutes, and the annual effect from a single typical plant is to cause twenty-five fatalities, 60,000 cases of respiratory disease, and $25 million in property damage. Another type of gaseous pollutant from coal burning is nitrogen oxide, also the principal pollutant from automobiles and the reason why new cars must have expensive pollution-control equipment and must use lead-free gasoline. A single coal-burning power plant emits as much nitrogen oxide as 200,000 automobiles, and nothing is being done about it.

Then there is the smoke, consisting of tiny solid particles. According to a widespread impression, the smoke from coal burning has been essentially eliminated, but this is true only of the larger particles that are the most visible. The situation is much less favorable with regard to the very tiny particles that are more harmful because they easily enter our lungs; their effects are generally considered to be comparable to those of the sulfur compounds. Another class of pollutant released in the burning of coal is hundreds of different organic compounds, at least forty of which are known to cause cancer; perhaps the best known of these is benzpyrene, the principal cancer-causing agent in cigarette smoking. And finally there is the ash, the bulk solid material produced at a rate of 1,000 pounds per minute, which, while not dangerous, introduces some difficult environmental problems in its disposal.

What are the wastes from a typical nuclear power plant? They are made up of a number of radioactive elements. A few of these are released into the environment as gases or in contaminated water (where they may be causing an average of one fatality every fifty years), but the vastly greater part is in storage. It is the disposal of this "high-level waste" that has been attracting so much attention of late. How does this nuclear-waste material differ from the wastes produced from burning coal?

The most spectacular difference between the two is in the amount generated: the quantities of nuclear wastes are some five million times smaller by weight and billions of times smaller by volume. So small are the amounts involved, indeed, that the annual waste from one nuclear plant would fit under a typical dining-room table. Since, moreover, the electricity produced in creating it sells for about $200 million, we could afford to spend up to $2 million to dispose of this material without increasing the cost of electricity by as much as 1 per cent. Cost is therefore no consideration in the disposal problem.

The question of potential danger is more complicated. Both coal and nuclear wastes are toxic—although in terms of overall numbers coal wastes are potentially much more dangerous. Thus, if all the sulfur compounds released by one power plant were inhaled, 300 million people a day could die from them. This is 500 times more than the lethal potential of the nuclear wastes. Such an index of measurement, however, is obviously unrealistic, for it does not take into account the ways in which toxic material can be absorbed by human beings.

One complication is the issue of durability. The dangerous chemicals produced in coal burning generally last for only a few days, whereas nuclear wastes lose their toxicity very much more slowly. (Throughout this discussion, estimates include all the effects added up over time.) Yet the burning of coal may also produce harmful long-range effects. The climatic changes due to carbon dioxide, for example, may last for thousands or even millions of years, and there is evidence that sulfur compounds which eventually settle to the ground are recycled into the air by bacteria metabolism to redo their damage many times over. In addition, small amounts of arsenic, selenium, cadmium, mercury, and so forth are released in coal burning, and their toxicity lasts forever.

Another point: when considering the very long-term effects of nuclear waste, it is important to

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consider the fact that in using nuclear power we are burning up uranium, and uranium is responsible for a significant amount of natural radiation to which mankind has always been exposed. In burning up this uranium, we are saving future lives; it turns out that after 100,000 years or so, the danger averted by doing so exceeds that of the waste. People living then will experience *less* net radiation exposure as a result of our using nuclear power today.

The nuclear-waste disposal problem has been termed "unsolved," but all this really means is that a method of disposal has not yet been decided upon. It would be relatively simple and cheap, for instance, to convert the nuclear wastes into glass rods and dump them in the ocean. The technology for conversion to glass is well established, and no one can claim that we do not know how to dump things in the ocean. Since the oceans are already full of radioactivity—principally from potassium, a naturally radioactive element which is an important component of salt—the radiation exposure to aquatic life would not be significantly increased. The principal danger here is that small additional amounts of radioactivity would get into fish which are ultimately eaten.

What would the fatality rate be from this method of disposal? Only one in ten billion atoms in the ocean gets into a human being somewhere in the world each year, and this might result in an average of one fatality every ten years (0.1 per year) due to the waste from one power plant. By comparison, the disposal procedures which until very recently have been followed for coal-burning wastes—simply releasing them into the atmosphere without any sophisticated treatment—have been causing twenty-five fatalities per year from sulfur compounds alone, 250 times more than the nuclear counterpart.

But perhaps the most meaningful comparison between coal-burning and nuclear wastes is in terms of the technology presently available for disposal in each case. For nuclear waste this involves converting the substance produced into rocklike form and burying it deep underground. Here again there need be no fear of large-scale contamination, for the ground is already full of radioactivity from uranium, thorium, potassium, and other naturally radioactive elements, and any radioactivity that might be added in this way would not appreciably increase the total. The danger is that the buried waste might come into contact with ground water, dissolve, and eventually be absorbed into food or water supplies. Such processes, however, take a rather long time physically—typically tens of thousands of years; during the few hundred years when the waste is still highly toxic,* the protection afforded is excellent. With regard to long-term effects, consider the rate at which rock is eroded: in average rock at the depth of waste burial, less than one atom in two trillion escapes and gets into human food or drink each year. Thus, one year's buried waste from a single nuclear power plant might eventually cause an average of .001 fatalities.

For coal-burning plants, the best available or near-future technology might be capable of removing 90 per cent of the sulfur emissions, which would then reduce the effects to 2.5 fatalities per year. At this level, nitrogen oxides and smoke would make similar contributions, and, of course, the cancer-causing chemicals would still be unhampered. Altogether, then, it would probably be unrealistic to hope to get the fatality rate below five per year, 5,000 times higher than for the nuclear case.

In summary, nuclear wastes are far less dangerous than coal-burning wastes on every count. They are far less hazardous to dispose of, whether one thinks in terms of traditionally simple and cheap disposal methods or the more sophisticated methods made possible by present and near-future technology. Why, then, have the press, the public, and our political establishment alike come to view the nuclear-waste problem as so difficult and dangerous, so that official government policy is to promote the use of coal wherever possible and use nuclear energy only as a "last resort"?

One possible explanation is the difference in the type of danger posed by these two wastes. Coal-burning wastes do their damage through chemical reactions, whereas nuclear wastes do theirs through the radiation they emit. Harmful though they may be, chemical poisons are at least familiar, while radiation is viewed by the public as something both new and mysterious, hence more to be feared.

Yet there is nothing whatsoever new about radiation. Mankind has always been bombarded by radiation—from above in the form of cosmic rays from outer space; from below due to the natural radioactivity in rock and soil; from all sides due to this same natural radioactivity in the bricks and stones of our building materials; from within due to the natural radioactivity of potassium in our bodies; and from the very air we breathe due to the omnipresence of radon, a naturally radioactive gas. Yet little attention is paid to any of this natural radiation, which could in fact be cut down considerably, and only slightly more is paid to the problem of medical x-rays, the new form of radiation-exposure introduced in our century, which could be drastically reduced without compromising medical effectiveness. It is only in the matter of nuclear wastes that the alarm is sounded, though each of the other sources involves hundreds of times more radiation exposure than do these, and though nuclear wastes can never increase our radiation exposure by more than a tiny fraction of 1 per cent, whereas coal-burning wastes have increased our exposure to sulfur compounds a hundredfold.

If there is nothing new about radiation, there is also nothing mysterious about it. It is a far simpler phenomenon than air pollution

*The waste loses 99.98 per cent of its toxicity after 500 years. By this time a lethal dose is about a quarter of a pound, making it less toxic than some natural rocks.

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from coal burning, for instance; it is much more easily detected and measured; it has been the subject of far more scientific research; and it is far better understood. Radiation effects are under constant study by several international and national commissions, a special United Nations scientific committee, and a committee of the National Academy of Sciences. According to statements by all of these groups, the figures cited for fatalities due to radiation are based on highly conservative procedures; hence they are likely to be over- rather than under-estimated.

The figures cited for fatalities from coal-burning wastes, on the other hand, represent an average of some very crude guesses. According to one well known and never refuted paper in the scientific literature ("Air Pollution and Human Health," by L. B. Lave and E. P. Seskin, *Science*, August 21, 1970), there is good evidence that coal-burning effects may actually be ten times worse than these estimates suggest. Most of the chemical compounds produced in coal burning have never been investigated for toxicity; at least a hundred are suspected of being carcinogens. Nor, as I have already pointed out, do we understand the effects of the huge quantities of carbon dioxide now being discharged into the atmosphere, or know what eventually happens to the sulfur that has been released. Coal-burning wastes are much more mysterious than nuclear ones.

Finally, it is no doubt the association with the atom bomb that has caused the discussion of nuclear wastes to be surrounded by an atmosphere of fear. Closely involved with this is the special apprehension over the role played by radiation in causing genetic mutations. But in fact the genetic effects of radiation are quite mild. Horrifying though the impact was on their lives, there is no evidence of genetic effects among the survivors of the World War II atomic-bomb attacks on Japan, even though they included 25,000 who received millions of times more radiation than could be expected to result from nuclear-waste products. On the other hand, coal-burning wastes include chemicals that are likewise capable of inducing genetic mutations, though so little is known about the subject that it is seldom discussed. About 6 per cent of *all* live births involve genetic defects, and no one believes that more than a tiny fraction of them are due to radiation.

THE more we delve into this tale of two wastes, the more illogical the story becomes. We have yet to find a single area in which nuclear wastes can be shown to be as dangerous as coal wastes. True, there are studies concluding that a given disposal method for nuclear waste is not perfect, that permanent isolation cannot be guaranteed, etc., etc. But these studies miss the point; the wastes from coal-burning are not isolated either, but rather are deliberately dispersed throughout our environment.

It is said about nuclear energy that we enjoy the energy today while our progeny must bear the burden of living with our waste. This may seem unfair to them, but actually we place an infinitely heavier burden on our progeny by consuming all the earth's resources of coal (as well as oil and gas). These materials are exceedingly valuable as feedstock for making plastics, chemicals, and medicines, and will therefore be sorely needed in the future, especially since we are also consuming most of the world's other mineral resources. It would be far better for our progeny if we used nuclear power than if we burned up the earth's coal.

WE SUFFER 100,000 fatalities each year in the United States from accidents of various sorts, plus ten million disabling injuries, but there has never been a fatality or disabling injury due to nuclear wastes, and there very probably never will be. Yet we are told from all sides that what we should worry about are the dangers of nuclear waste. In the process, we are being deprived of a cheap and abundant source of energy at a time when our nation sorely needs it, and when the consequences of such deprivation may well prove tragic.

Remembering Harold Rosenberg

Seymour Krim

HE MOVED very slowly in the last couple of years, this towering figure who could have passed for Captain Ahab, rising and dipping with his cane in hand as he inched his way up Tenth Street toward Third Avenue to get a cab. That's when I mostly saw him when he was in town; he and his wife May had a place in East Hampton for at least half the year, and for another two months he also taught in the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago, along with Saul Bellow and some other celebrated types.

I usually caught up with him on

SEYMOUR KRIM *is currently at work on a "jazz meditation" about America, entitled* Chaos.

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the street, or invited him over to my little place diagonally across from his big World War II bargain apartment, where he couldn't resist pointing disgustedly out of his window to the sloppy, *New Yorker*-cartoon back yard of his neighbor. But it was easier to be with him on neutral turf—the sidewalk or my place—than in his own musty fortress, where you felt hemmed in by the claustrophobia of his artifacts and history, thirty-odd years in one place, and where he had the advantage over you for his own fun and games. Besides, the phone was always ringing and that made me jumpy and even jealous. Harold Rosenberg was a very popular man who had carved out his own loyal circle of friends and flatterers after a lot of lean years bucking all the Establishments.

"Now that I'm famous," he once said, "they all want a piece." He wasn't the most modest of heroes, he even gave in to some embarrassing moments of public self-caressing, but it was all easily forgiven (as one would a hungry kid). W. H. Auden, born a year after Harold, had once been called the most intelligent poet writing in English; one could say the same about Rosenberg as a critic. I never thought of him primarily as an art critic, although that was where he made his celebrity, and with justice.

But he brought to it that long, ascetic involvement with literature and ideas that characterized all of the *Partisan Review* intellectuals, a kind of World War II *Magic Mountain* group who scrutinized the Western world from 7,000 feet up in the Alps of the New York mind. Rosenberg was never one of the power-hungry politicians of the *PR* group, like that frustrated culture commissar, Philip Rahv. As a matter of fact, he was one of the most skeptical, lancing, anti-political iconoclasts I've ever run into, for all his expert Marxmanship. But you could no more dissociate Harold from the *Partisan Review* enclave than you could two of his keenest competitors, Clement Greenberg and Dwight Macdonald.

No particular love was lost between Macdonald and Rosenberg, Yale vs. Brooklyn College, if you will, but the amusing thing was that for almost a quarter of a century they lived in the same four-story whitestone across from me, Rosenberg on the second floor, Macdonald on the fourth, often barely grunting hello. And then both these brilliant unaffiliated radicals followed each other onto the *New Yorker*—once for both of them the incarnation of vapid luxury values—where each became a star in successive decades. O. Henry would have had a field day with a plot that began like this.

As for Harold and Clement Greenberg, I never heard either one mention the other, but knew through the Village grapevine that they were engaged in a bitter intellectual battle over the Abstract Expressionists—as to which one would represent the movement to the baffled public, or even to the AbEx's (as we called them) themselves, who could certainly use a lucid explicator. But neither Rosenberg nor Greenberg was about to step aside and win a nun's award for self-effacement. Clem was warm and homey, red-faced, going prematurely bald, the very image of a kindly vulnerable uncle to jittery young writers and painters on the scene. But he was known to use his fists, not just his mouth, when he felt he had been wronged.

HAROLD looked and shone like the Lion of Judah. He was about 6'4", a really heroic-looking prince among the bookish intellectuals, added to which he had a congenital game leg that had to be propped up like a bayonet when he was sitting. It gave him a Byronic wound, which increased his romantic air—the ladies were not immune—and probably made a number of his thick-lensed intellectual peers defensive as hell.

But Rosenberg was not taken in by much of this. He had a workaday absurdist view of himself and the world, once telling me with matter-of-factness that when he was looking at some art in Paris during the 60's a French war veteran spotted him limping on the street and thought he was a fellow victim of the carnage. He made Harold get into the wheelbarrow he was pulling and pushed the celebrated oversized critic to a gallery four blocks away.

I'm not sure Harold had the dogged patience of Clement Greenberg in the long-range contest for contemporary American art—life as a sort of matinee idol of the intellectual underground had made him impetuous, mustaches bristling—but he was by far the more intense, ideologically dramatic writer. When he coined the famous phrase, "Action Painting," for the emerging New York style, Greenberg answered with a bit of cool sarcasm that Harold was trying to sell the new movement as "not actually art, or at least not art as the stuffy past has known it." Clem prided himself on knowing more about the traditional history of oil painting, which he probably did, and tried to put Rosenberg down as a slick mystifier who wanted to sound "very profound, and most art critics have a special weakness for the profound." Between the two of them, these formidable polemicists more or less sliced up the original AbEx crew into the Rosenberg and Greenberg camps—a phenomenon that later gave Tom Wolfe mischievous fuel for *The Painted Word*—with Harold becoming the unshakable lifelong champion of Willem (Bill) De Kooning and Clem going to bat for Jackson Pollock, at least for a while.

One story that filtered back to the Village from East Hampton in the late 40's must have given Greenberg a chuckle. It seems that Harold had ticked off the super-sensitive Jackson Pollock by saying in an *Art News* article that there were a few people in the new movement "who can't draw." Pollock, a neighbor out on the Island, immediately thought that he had been singled out. He brooded over these three little words all day, after reading the piece in the morning, either with or without consolation from the bottle. (Reports differed; he was then going to an analyst and some said he was ferociously sober.) At any rate, around twilight he stormed into the Rosenbergs' modest compound and shouted for Harold to come out of the house, where Jackson would then take him apart like a fillet. After an electric silence, May Rosenberg stepped onto the

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porch and is supposed to have said: "Jackson, stop picking on poor Harold, he has a bad leg!"

The idea of this huge colossus, Rosenberg, being stopped from defending himself with his hands because of a stiff leg was slightly ridiculous to those of us who knew how he towered above the opposition. We also knew that Harold could even be a bully on occasion, so quick and overwhelming were his ideas allied to that intimidating, royal size. But Pollock was an inspired wild man when the mood was on him, and he had wrecked the Cedar Tavern more than once; May Rosenberg probably had the right idea, although I would have been curious to see Harold in action. Using your typing or painting hands for another lowdown purpose was not a strange sight on the New York lit/art scene of the 40's and 50's.

But Wyoming-type head smacking (Pollock hailed from Cody) was about as far from the dazzling machinery of Harold's urban intellect as you could get. He often struck me as the embodiment of pure, passionate mind itself, like those great French modernist poets —Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Mallarmé, Valéry—whom he revered. Even in his last published article in the *New Yorker*, when the first martini (his quick test of health in the last years) must no longer have tasted good, he speaks with chaste feeling about "the light, calm, order, and sensuality of Baudelaire's classical paradise." He was loyal to his pure aesthetic brotherhood to the end.

MOST people who knew of Rosenberg as one of the incontestably big critics of the day had no idea that he had wanted above all to be a great poet. He even published the usual slender volume, *Trance Above the Streets*, but his poetry never really bit into the age as did his prose. Yet the poet was always there, in the neat titles of his collections and articles—*The Tradition of the New, The Herd of Independent Minds*—and in his "prestigious way of compressing and interweaving his metaphors," as the *Saturday Review* once put it. It was a poet's sensibility, toughened by all the years spent in the calculating world of prose, which led to that extraordinary style he eventually mastered, where every word is pared to the bone and the bones themselves have been soaked in the last forty years of New York intellectual life.

Yet I got impatient with Harold's style before he died, and wonder whether he hadn't reached his limit a few years before and wasn't just repeating himself at the end. I knew him to be a simultaneously funny, brilliant, immensely provocative, emotional man, and yet the prose face of his *New Yorker* pieces always hid the emotion, was as smooth as oil, set as a mask. You could always anticipate the measured calmness of a Rosenberg piece, even the trenchant dynamite of the thinking tucked knowingly under the surface. It may be that the time we are now living in wants the "dynamite" out front, but whatever the reason, the impact of his unique style had worn off for me and came to seem more and more an unflappable virtuoso performance.

Since I always thought of Harold as an almost wickedly Houdini-like thinker, one who could only have come out of the New York radical/highbrow milieu with all its fanatical scholarship and ironic, jesting humor, I don't know how valuable his work was strictly as art criticism. Time will tell its usual tale; as will the other art pundits and rivals, who may have been stifled when Harold was riding high, wide, and handsome. But I would think that for the major painters of his generation and the one directly behind it, just as for younger writers like myself, he was a goad and a leader by virtue of owning one of the most scintillating intelligences of his period.

Still, whether he did justice to the newer American art movements that followed AbEx, and whether he really *saw* what the younger artists were doing—I have my doubts. In fact, I think it all to the good that his influential *New Yorker* column will now be opened up to a new generation, even though he made it a platform for some of the most original ideas ever published in that magazine about contemporary art and its effect on contemporary life, meaning us. He never wrote at a level beneath his thinking.

ROSENBERG's going sweeps a period with it. Most of the survivors of the *Partisan Review* heyday are now tired or quiet, and of the original Abstract Expressionists only De Kooning, at seventy-four, is still painting his dreams. Harold came out of a context of Depression radical politics and mandarin poetry and Greenwich Village painters' cabals that will never come again in the same zebra-striped package. And as one of the "kids"—at fifty-six!—who inherited the beauty of stunning, prodigious minds like his, I feel that a vital fiber has now been torn from my being forever. It is a loss that is impossible to communicate: those we could never imagine dying are passing into mist, and we who are left feel naked and unworthy, no matter what good things might come our way.

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Wagner's Holy Family

Samuel Lipman

THE families of musical geniuses do not usually amount to much. Even the happy exceptions—the composer sons of J. S. Bach, Robert Schumann's pianist wife Clara—seem ultimately to achieve only modest reputations, while someone like Beethoven's nephew remains of interest solely for the light his sufferings throw on his uncle's psyche. For the rest, the relatives of great composers have mostly played a supporting role and then vanished into obscurity. But the case of at least one immortal composer's family is altogether different. The relatives of Richard Wagner—in-laws and "out-laws" alike—constitute a family whose position in history seems secure, even if its contributions have not always been honored.

The saga of the Wagners, as a group with an identity separable from that of the composer himself, began in the middle 1860's with Richard's second wife, Cosima. This redoubtable woman, in addition to fulfilling her duties as mother of his children and manager of his extensive household, acted during Wagner's lifetime as secretary, copyist, and diplomat for the burgeoning world career of the Master of Bayreuth. Upon Wagner's death in 1883, she assumed the directorship of the festival established to perform his operas, and until her breakdown in health in 1906, she ran the Wagner inheritance with an iron hand.

When she was no longer able to perform this task of preservation, her work was taken over by Siegfried, the youngest of the three children she had borne to Wagner. While it could not in any way be said that the son shared his father's genius, he was a competent composer and creditable conductor; some of his performances of his father's works and one of his own as well, dating from the mid-1920's, are available to this day on discs.* But more important than Siegfried's conducting may well have been his ability to bring the Bayreuth Festival through the difficult years of war, defeat, revolution, and inflation in tolerable artistic and financial condition.

It had been plain for some time that Siegfried's political sympathies lay—as did, finally, those of his father—with the nationalistic Right in German life. His public partiality to the Right during the 1920's may well have been due in some degree to the influence of his wife, Winifred, English by birth and the adopted daughter of Wagner's disciple, Karl Klindworth. Winifred was an early admirer and personal friend of Adolf Hitler. And it was Hitler's fanatic enthusiasm for Wagner, demonstrated by frequent attendance at Bayreuth performances, that resulted in the festival being made a ward of the German state, and that guaranteed its survival during the Nazi era.

The inevitable result of this unholy alliance of art and the politics of murder was the total discrediting of Winifred at the end of World War II, and her official removal from the festival which she had run since her husband's death in 1930. Her place was shortly taken by her two sons, Wieland and Wolfgang. They put together the first postwar festival in 1951, with Wieland as the major artistic influence and Wolfgang as business manager. The rehabilitation of Bayreuth was quickly accomplished, helped along in no small measure by the striking success of Wieland's 1951 stagings of the *Ring* and *Parsifal*. These productions, in their departure from the Victorian realism previously associated with the staging of Wagner, and in their conception of the operas in terms of modern psychology, influenced future performances not only of Wagner but of opera in general.

Upon Wieland's death of cancer in 1966, Wolfgang assumed artistic as well as business control, and must be considered responsible for the choice of the controversial French producer, Patrice Chereau, to stage the *Ring* in 1976 at the centennial of the festival. Wolfgang's sister, Friedelind (who, in revolt against the family, had defected from Germany at the beginning of World War II and written an anti-family and anti-Nazi book, *The Royal Family of Bayreuth*), has made a relatively minor career, mostly in England, as a teacher of operatic production; it seems also that the fourth generation of Wagners continues to find itself drawn both toward Wagner's works and the carrying on of his reputation. And meanwhile, the crusty old Winifred remains alive in her eighties, and only recently was the sole subject of a five-hour film documentary in which she aired her still friendly feelings toward Hitler.

CLEARLY, however, of all these strong-willed, talented, and intelligent people, pride of place must go to the matriarch, Cosima. She was the daughter of remarkable parents—the great composer-pianist Franz Liszt and his mistress, the French aristocrat and writer, Marie D'Agoult (who wrote under the pseudonym Daniel Stern). Cosima's parents were never married, and after her birth in 1837 she was

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SAMUEL LIPMAN's *articles on Wagner in* COMMENTARY *include "Performing the Ring" (January) and a review of the New York City Opera production of* Die Meistersinger *("Wagner Comes to Broadway," January 1976). Mr. Lipman performed the piano quartets of Beethoven last September in a concert at Hunter College sponsored by the Beethoven Society.*

* Electrola 1C 147-30 647/48 M.

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brought at first under the supervision of Liszt's mother. Later she was put in the care of cold and unfeeling governesses, and long afterward felt that she had always been an orphan. In 1857, she married the pianist and conductor, Hans van Bülow, an artist of the highest seriousness, whose edition of the Beethoven piano sonatas was for many years the standard version used by students.

Bülow was a fervent acolyte of Wagner, whose works he conducted to the Master's musical satisfaction. He first met Cosima when Liszt's new (and final) love, the Princess Wittgenstein, decided to remove the young girl from her mother's presence in Paris by sending her to Berlin, where Bülow became her piano teacher. At a concert shortly thereafter, Bülow conducted the *Tannhäuser* Overture—which was hissed. Cosima consoled him, and at that moment, it would seem, they made their decision to marry.

The marriage was scarcely happy. Bülow was moody, petulant, and easily shattered. Cosima supported him in his career and had two children by him. She had already met Wagner when she was in her teens; she and Bülow visited Wagner on their honeymoon, and the next year the two of them were witness to the final collapse of his marriage, and of his affair with Mathilde Wesendonck (whose affections were the stimulus for the composition of *Tristan*). Wagner and Cosima, who was twenty-four years younger than he, became deeply attracted to one another. In 1863, while on their way to one of Bülow's concerts, they "sealed their vow to belong entirely to each other." The contrast between this vibrant, energetic girl and Wagner's wife Minna—from whom he had been estranged for some years—could not have been greater. In place of a nagging *petite bourgeoise*, Wagner now found a cosmopolitan, cultured woman, a sophisticate in art and literature, and above all—here the difference between Cosima and Minna was at its clearest—a fanatical believer in his music, his future, and his immortal mission.

At this point (1863), Wagner's position was a difficult one. The operas conceived after *Lohengrin* seemed as if they would be impossible to produce; he had suspended work on the *Ring* at the end of the second act of *Siegfried*; and he was on the run from an army of importunate creditors. But the next year a miracle occurred—Wagner was rescued from ruin by the eighteen-year-old King Ludwig II of Bavaria. Ludwig made it his life's sacred duty to enable Wagner to compose and have his operas produced. As a part of his royal support—which indeed lasted until Wagner's death—he lent the composer a villa at Starnberg. Here, if not earlier, Wagner and Cosima became lovers, and in 1865 their daughter Isolde—named, as all Wagner's children were to be, for a character in the opera he was working on at the moment—was born.

For the birth of Wagner's and Cosima's first child, the fiction was maintained that the father was Bülow. But in 1867 another daughter, Eva, arrived—in later years she was to become the wife of the notorious anti-Semite and premature Hitlerite Houston Stewart Chamberlain—and this time it could hardly be denied that Wagner was the father. Wagner had, indeed, already been driven out of Ludwig's capital city of Munich in 1865 not only because of his political intrigues but also because of his triangle with Cosima and the strangely complaisant Bülow, and in 1868, two years after the death of Minna, Cosima joined Wagner at Tribschen in Switzerland. They were to remain there until 1872, when they moved permanently to Bayreuth.

THE Wagners' life in Switzerland and later in Germany was the subject of diaries kept by Cosima and covering the years from 1869 to 1883 in intimate and exhaustive detail. For a variety of complex reasons involving family squabbles and intrigues among the faithful, these diaries were never published or even made widely available to scholars, though they were selectively used in the 1900's by Carl Glasenapp to complete the final volume of his biography of Wagner, and in the 1920's by Richard du Moulin Eckart for his biography of Cosima. Both these works are, unfortunately, hagiographical and even sycophantic in tone and so of limited value. There was therefore a great deal of interest attending the first publication of these diaries in Germany in 1976; the appearance of the first volume in English translation in this country is a welcome event.*

As might be expected from a journal so voluminous as to run to 600,000 words for the volume dealing with the years from 1869 to 1877 alone, the reader is presented with a fascinating look in depth at the early years of the Wagner family as seen from the most partial viewpoint imaginable, an account of personal and public events keenly felt and arbitrarily recorded. The most public aspect of the Wagners' life during this period—and the most important aspect of all, in that it was the underpinning of everything else—was the triumphant progress of Wagner from a *cause célèbre* and royal protégé to the rank of first composer in the world, a rank acknowledged by friends and enemies alike. Not only, by the end of this time, were his operas being performed in all the major cities of Europe—and in America as well—to audiences shaken by transports of enthusiasm; but as the statistics in the *Diaries* make clear, these performances had become moneymaking enterprises undertaken for profit as much as for art. The same financial success could not be claimed for the early years of Bayreuth, but here what is breathtaking is the very audacity of Wagner's conception of the festival, an idea which has no parallels in the history of music: a platform specially created for one man's own musical works, established in his lifetime to worldwide attention and excitement.

Bayreuth was not founded without anxieties and moments of despair. In the end, Wagner's scheme of supplying the necessary

* *Cosima Wagner's Diaries 1869-1883*, Volume I, 1869-1877, edited by Martin Gregor-Dellin and Dietrich Mack, translated and with an introduction by Geoffrey Skelton, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1199 pp., $29.95.

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funds through many individual subscriptions failed, and his own concert-giving activities in Germany and abroad also proved insufficient; the drain these put on his health is plainly apparent in the *Diaries*. What made Bayreuth possible in the end was the support of King Ludwig, and much of the Wagners' time was evidently taken up with keeping Ludwig attached to the cause, an enterprise made all the more difficult by Wagner's unwillingness to see his operas performed in Ludwig's own theater in Munich.

OCCUPYING a great deal of space in these pages is the shocking story of both Wagners' virulent and committed hatred of Jews. The domestic revelations herein will give little comfort to those who still think that Wagner's anti-Semitism can be explained by his envy of the sucessful Jewish composers, Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer. Wagner was perfectly capable of ignoring or even admiring the successes of others; he did not become an Italophobe because Verdi was famous, and he did not hate his own Germans because of their worship of Beethoven. Even his contempt for the French and their civilization is not really cut from the same cloth as his feelings about Jews. His relationship with the French was one of rejected love, stemming most obviously from the scandalous treatment accorded *Tannhäuser* at the Paris Opera in 1861 by the bloods of the Jockey Club. Cosima quotes him as urging the burning of Paris during the 1870-71 war; yet in 1873, during a period of great uncertainty about Bayreuth, she writes:

> He [Wagner] says he has a good mind to tell his joke in public (that it was his misfortune that Napoleon had not won, for then Napoleon would have become Germany's ruler, would have familiarized himself with German things at once and have built R's theater for him).

Wagner scarcely makes such jokes about Jews.

Among the true disciples of Wagner were, notably, several Jews, among them Hermann Levi and Josef Rubinstein. Levi, a rabbi's son who was the first conductor of *Parsifal* in 1882, put up almost uncomplainingly with the Wagners' anti-Semitism until his own death in 1900; something of what he faced is shown by Cosima's patronizing words:

> At parting, Herr L tells me he is downright glad to be leaving, for he feels such a complete nonentity here, and will have to try and find himself again; a curious attitude—I should have thought one would only find oneself properly when one was confronted with a great man and could forget oneself.

Rubinstein first made his appearance to the Wagners in an 1872 letter from Kharkov beginning "I am a Jew" and, according to Cosima, "demanding salvation through participation in the production of the *Nibelungen*." Rubinstein served until Wagner's death as court pianist, coaching singers and playing Beethoven and Chopin for the family in the evening; his immense talent and doglike devotion to the cause were not enough to preserve him from racial slurs. But even then Rubinstein could not endure life without the Master, and scarcely one year after Wagner's death the Jew who had wanted to be saved by the *Ring* committed suicide in Switzerland.

IN MUSICAL matters, it becomes evident from these journals just how much of Wagner's time was spent listening to the works of a wide range of composers, from Bach to Liszt. Of these it should come as no surprise that his favorite was Beethoven, who he felt was his only equal. All the rest had major defects in Wagner's eyes, though some, like Haydn and Mozart, he on the whole admired. Brahms he largely denigrated, and Cosima shared his feelings:

> In the evening I make the acquaintance of Herr Brahms, who plays a piano quartet of his own making, a red, crude-looking man, his opus very dry and stilted.

Thus do the greats and their intimates speak of colleagues.

Their experience of the works of others was not limited to music. Many evenings were spent by Richard and Cosima reading aloud the masterpieces of world literature, with the repertory ranging from Sophocles and Aeschylus to Turgenev. In drama, Shakespeare was Wagner's choice, as Beethoven was in music. It is perhaps idle to complain that the Wagners' comments about literature often seem arbitrary and even simple-minded (and by extension cast doubt on their judgments in music). One should hardly expect critical depth or fair-mindedness from a composer and dramatist deeply involved in his own work. What is significant is the evident seriousness with which Wagner and Cosima regarded the entire enterprise of artistic creation; the conclusion can hardly be escaped that underlying this seriousness was Wagner's estimation of himself as already an immortal artist, the peer of all his forebears in the artistic pantheon.

The *Diaries* are also a chronicle of the many friends, admirers, and disciples Wagner collected during these years. One such friend and admirer, whom Cosima mistakenly thought a disciple, was Nietzsche. Many entries document the uneasy course of the Wagner-Nietzsche relationship. At first, when the philosopher read *The Origin and Aim of Greek Tragedy* out loud to her, Cosima burbled with "great delight" over the dedication to Wagner and added, ". . . in it one sees a gifted man imbued with R's ideas in his own way." Three years later the Wagners were registering their displeasure at Nietzsche's effrontery in speaking well to them of a work by Brahms. And even earlier than this, Cosima was disturbed by Nietzsche's dedication of his *Homer* to his own sister, after first promising it to her; after discussing it with Wagner, Cosima found Nietzsche's behavior on this occasion marked by "an addiction to treachery."

Family concerns occupy much space in the *Diaries*. Children's illnesses—such diseases as whooping cough and diphtheria were then ordinary, if frightful, occurrences—took up much of Cosima's time,

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as did worry about Wagner's physical and psychological health. She herself suffered from eye trouble, which occasionally interfered with keeping her diary. Money worries were always present; notwithstanding the large sums coming regularly from King Ludwig, and the ever-rising royalties from opera performances, expenditures always seemed to exceed income. And from time to time reminders of the past appeared in the shape of long-forgotten creditors demanding repayment for old loans. Wagner was never a good economizer. He lived in truly opulent fashion with a household of twenty-five, including the so-called Nibelungen Chancellery, disciples whose job was to copy the *Ring* score in preparation for its performance.

THROUGHOUT these pages, Cosima is obsessed by feelings of guilt over her abandonment of Bülow—and, for a time, of her elder children as well. She dreamed often of Bülow (as did Wagner), and blamed herself for all of Bülow's personal and financial troubles. It was, no doubt, her consciousness of her own bad behavior that was responsible for the special brand of suspicion and pessimism she reserved for Blandine and Daniela, her children by Bülow. She found them perverse in character and felt they mocked her for her infidelity. Toward her two daughters by Wagner she was more indulgent and even trusting. But like Wagner himself, she reserved her full parental love (and a large measure of fatuity as well) for the infant Siegfried, with whom she was pregnant as the *Diaries* begin. As Geoffrey Skelton suggests in his excellent introduction, the *Diaries* in some way seem to have represented to Cosima a justification of her conduct.

Deeply as she may have felt over her treatment of Bülow, her grand passion for Wagner was more momentous by far. Swept perhaps equally by sexual passion and her utter conviction of the value of Wagner's music and ideas, she was a wife heroically strong in dealing with the world, and at the same time putty in her lover's hands. For him she gave up family, religion, and nationality. His music caused her to lose control of her emotions; when she heard the love duet from *Tristan* her only feeling was, "to him, to him." She saw her existence in the extreme terms of the *Liebestod*. She wanted a photograph of the two of them, taken with her kneeling before him; when he died, for twenty-five hours she would not leave the body, and for days she refused to eat.

This love was remarkably joined to a deeply religious nature. Born a Catholic, Cosima could hardly remain one after her divorce from Bülow and remarriage to Wagner. She soon became a Protestant, defined as such more by her hatred of Jesuits and the Pope (which she shared with Wagner) than by any sympathy for Lutheran dogma. In any case, the real outlet for her religious bent was her husband and his cause.

It is this veneration of Wagner and Wagnerism which constitutes the endlessly repeated *leitmotif*—if not indeed the *idée fixe*—of the *Diaries*. She saw her love for him as renunciation, self-sacrifice, and rebirth. She found it "easy to believe that another age would have regarded me as a religious fanatic—now love has got me fully in its grasp, I know nothing else and am willing to suffer in and for it." In a euphoric mood after the birth of Siegfried, she rhapsodizes: "Could I but say a hymn to the godhead! R sings it for me, my hymn is my love for him." She calls him the "One and Only," and when he remarks that she should have married a god, she answers back, "Well, I did."

For Cosima, Wagner possessed "the divinely daemonic power of genius"; the notes on his penciled scores she thought "sacred runes." The *Lohengrin* Prelude was for her "such an ecstasy that I do not hear this music like other music, but experience it like a vision." A rehearsal of Wagner's music is "glorious, utter liberation of the soul." Nor are these isolated examples; the *Diaries* are full of such passages.

Wagner saw Cosima in much the same terms as she saw him. He thought her touch could bring back the dead, and told her that her love "meant the end of the world for him." Once, embracing her, he cried, "for my Redeemer liveth." Another time, kissing her, he said, "This is the holy Urdar Fount from which I draw wisdom." For him she was Eve and Mary. The divine character of the Wagnerian family milieu extended even to Siegfried: as he was being born, the sun rose in

> an incredibly beautiful, fiery glow which started to blaze with a richness of color never before seen . . . it was . . . reflected in the blue jewel box containing [Cosima's] portrait, so that this, covered by glass and set in a narrow gold frame, was transfigured in celestial splendor.

Their marriage seemed to her a reincarnation, a deliverance from a previous erring existence. When, in a moment that occurs at the very end of the first volume of these *Diaries*, Cosima asked Wagner whether he had not found a way of absorbing her into himself, he silently pointed to their grave—one of the first amenities he had seen to in the building of their new mansion in Bayreuth.

IT IS the revelation of these private attitudes which constitutes the value of the journals. Their significance quite makes up for the fact that these many words contain few passages of musical interest and little factual material hitherto unknown or necessary to an understanding of Wagner's career. Instead of such substantive disclosures, we are given here an account of the daily life of a holy family.*

* It should be noted in passing that this holy family had room in it, in theory if not in practice, for the men whose wives had been annexed by Wagner; in some of the strangest passages in the *Diaries*, Wagner and Cosima seek financial support for Bayreuth from Otto Wesendonck, still the husband of Wagner's inamorata of *Tristan* days. Wagner himself cherished the hope that some day he and Cosima might be reunited with Bülow. Even more remarkably, the two cuckolds seem to have shared these feelings. Wesendonck did indeed pay his financial tribute, and Bülow, after Wagner's death, helped bring Cosima out of her trancelike state of mourning with the telegraphed words, *"Soeur, il faut vivre."*

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The Wagners' feelings of holiness, which in our time would comfortingly be called delusions, were not restricted to their private view of themselves. When Cosima called the Bayreuth Festival Theater "the cross to which we are nailed, the temple in which we pray," she was not simply venting a personal opinion. She was also giving voice to the exalted regard in which Wagner was increasingly being held by the world of European culture. In 1873 a young businessman, anticipating the composition of *Parsifal,* introduced himself to the Wagners as a Knight of the Holy Grail; he was a member of the Munich branch of the Wagner societies then springing up all over Europe. Two years later a lady in waiting to the Empress of Austria told Cosima that she felt Wagner's art to be "like the creation of the world." People everywhere were beginning to talk of "pilgrimages" to Bayreuth, and by the turn of the century Colette could mockingly set one of her novels in Bayreuth, calling it the "holy city."

The practical effect of all this worship was that Wagner was taken as a source of ultimate wisdom on all manner of subjects—from the Jews to vivisection. His prose works were widely circulated in Wilhelminian Germany, and even appeared in 1911 in a cheap popular edition. In England, an eight-volume translation appeared in 1892 under the auspices of the London branch of the Wagner Society; it is still available in an elegant reprint edition.

What is often ignored today in the justifiable attempts to deflate Wagner's grandiosity and his intellectual flights is that their power is directly traceable not simply to his immense achievement as an artist. That achievement itself gained world recognition and carried Wagner's thought along with it only because of the lordship exercised by art over the 19th century, and because of the transcendental place accorded to music within that lordship.

The highest claim for the primacy of music within art was made, curiously enough, by a non-musician. It was Schopenhauer who spoke for the *Zeitgeist* when he wrote in *The World as Will and Idea*:

> Music . . . since it passes over the Ideas, is entirely independent of the phenomenal world, ignores it altogether, could to a certain extent exist if there were no world at all, which cannot be said of the other arts. . . . Music is thus by no means like the other arts, the copy of the Ideas, but the *copy of the Will itself.* . . . This is why the effect of music is so much more powerful and penetrating than that of the other arts, for they speak only of shadows, but it speaks of the thing itself.

The effect of all this on Wagner was dynamic. In 1870, as he was on the edge of completing the *Ring,* he paid his compliments to Schopenhauer as the first to "define the position of music . . . with philosophic clearness." (During the period of scandal surrounding their liaison, Wagner and Cosima signed their telegrams to each other *"Will"* and *"Vorstel"*—"Will" and "Idea"—respectively, presumably to avoid detection.) Under the influence of Schopenhauer, and obeying as well the dictates of his own estimate of his capacities, Wagner gave up a good deal of his previous insistence on the need for words to complete the music. For him, music now became the best way of apprehending reality.

Not only were the other arts to be explained by music, but music would replace religion as well. In 1874, Cosima writes, "The only possible church nowadays, R says today, is music, with Beethoven as the high priest." It was not just that Wagner felt, as he said when announcing his decision to write *Parsifal,* that "Art makes religion eternal." Rather, it seemed to Wagner that he in himself had superseded dogmatic religion, which he now disdained as a sop to the ignorant. Megalomania, never far from Wagner's mental state, could not have found clearer expression than in his proud boast, "When I write my treatise on the philosophy of music, church and state will be abolished."

Significantly, that other great megalomaniac of the century, Nietzsche, agreed at first with Wagner on the supreme importance of music. In *The Birth of Tragedy,* he wrote of the "renovation and purification of the German spirit through the fire magic of music." Nor was it only the Wagnerites who entertained this view. It was held also in circles deeply antipathetic to Wagner. In his new book *(Freud, Jews, and Other Germans),* Peter Gay quotes from the memoirs of Eduard Hanslick, the contemporaneous Viennese music critic who, in the name of absolute music, carried the banner of Brahms against the Wagnerites:

> As we listened to Brahms' B-flat major Sextet, after Wagner had in the afternoon performed various fragments from the *Ring* and from *Tristan,* we thought ourselves suddenly transported into a world of pure beauty—*eine reine Welt der Schönheit.* It sounded like a kind of redemption—*eine Erlösung.*

This same idea, now broadened to include the satanic as well as the redemptive force of music, underlies much of Thomas Mann's work, not only in the short stories with Wagnerian titles ("Tristan," "Blood of the Wälsungs") but also in his novel about a composer, *Doctor Faustus.* And in a sinister way it also underlies Wilhelm Furtwängler's remark, upon hearing from Toscanini that he would refuse to conduct under the German and Italian tyrannies: "There is always freedom where Beethoven's music resounds." This is music elevated beyond life itself, to the level of Isolde's *Liebestod*:

In dem wogenden Schwall,
in dem tönenden Schall,
in des Welt-Atems wehendem All,
ertrinken, versinken,
unbewusst, höchste Lust!

(In the surging swell, in the ringing sound,
in the vast wave of the world's breath,
to drown, to sink,
unconscious—supreme bliss!)

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While it lasted—and it remained regnant at least until the outbreak of World War I—this attitude provided the ideological rationalization and the psychological underpinnings of the greatest flowering Western music has ever known. The years from Beethoven to Strauss, so neatly dubbed the Romantic era, have given us today the substance of our repertory and established the terms by which music written both before and after has unavoidably come to be heard and judged. Still today, commercial success is accorded only to those performers who specialize in the masterpieces of the last century.

Yet in the meantime the world has changed. Music, having succeeded religion for many as the cultivated medium of self-transcendence and salvation, has itself been replaced, first by science and perhaps now by popular culture. From being a world-redeeming faith, music has become a pleasure justified by its contribution to the quality of our leisure. Even the mecca of Bayreuth has become just another expensive way station on the European summer-musical circuit. And along with the decline in the public image of serious music has gone an erosion of self-confidence among its practitioners. No large audience has yet been found for the musical production associated with the last half-century.

THE decline in the public image of serious music can only reinforce our present tendency to see the Romantic century as a sacred era, an age of special creation. This view of the 19th century as the holy, indeed the biblical, period of music accords well with the Wagners' view of themselves, and with their contemporaries' view of the Wagners. All were engaged in a higher religious enterprise, a very few as prophets and saviors, and a vast cultivated multitude as followers. The results were, by common consent, immortal. So the problem for musicians in our time is both simple and difficult: after the old testament, what room is there for the new?

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Books in Review

Politics as History

IN SEARCH OF HISTORY: A PERSONAL ADVENTURE. By THEODORE H. WHITE. *Harper & Row. 561 pp. $12.95.*

Reviewed by ELLIOTT ABRAMS

THEODORE H. WHITE is one of the most influential political writers of our time. His *Making of the President* series has taught a generation of journalists a mode of writing about politics, and a generation of politicians a mode of behavior. If White has not himself transformed the nature of American presidential politics, he has at least had a significant effect on the way we view our Presidents, and hence indirectly on our election campaigns and even on the administrations which emerge from them.

White's success is the product of a brilliant mind, long experience as a reporter, and extraordinary writing ability—and, perhaps most important, of an idea of history which has allowed him to give meaning to the story he has so skillfully been telling. As he wrote in 1975 in *Breach of Faith: The Fall of Richard Nixon*, White believes in the "simplest definition of history": that it is "the tale of the great forces that bear down on solitary men who accidentally stand at their junction. And it is the reactions of such men to the pressures on them that shape decisions, history, and lives." White is, then, in the tradition of Thomas Carlyle, who wrote that "the history of the world is but the biography of great men," and his undertaking has been to recount the history of modern America through the biographies of its great men—the men who seek its Presidency—and through the story of their quadrennial battles for public support.

In this undertaking, White early on invented a new form of political reporting, which combined the smallest detail with the widest conclusions. He did not simply report what any citizen could see—namely, what candidates said and did in public. Rather, he reported what was not visible—what the candidates wore and ate, who gave them advice, what their tactics were, and then, in the end, how they fit into the continuing story of American politics. He did this, at least, until 1976. As he began to cover the 1976 campaign, White found himself "confused," even "bewildered." The clarity was gone; the "old ideas no longer stretched over the real world as he saw and sensed it to be." White found that "he no longer knew how to string the stories together in any way that connected them with history." And so he stopped, deciding that "it was probably more useful to go back than to go on." Instead of *The Making of the President 1976*, we have White's memoirs, *In Search of History*, an aptly named and beautifully written volume.

As might have been expected, White's new book is a delight to read. He has led a wonderfully active and interesting life, and he writes of it with an attractive alternation between objectivity and passion. White was born in Boston into a lower-middle-class Jewish immigrant family which became very poor during the Depression. Yet despite his family's, and the nation's, economic condition, America was still a land of opportunity: his brains won White admission to the (free) Boston Latin School, and from there a scholarship to Harvard. A *summa cum laude* in history led to a fellowship which required only that White travel for a year and thereby educate himself; having studied Chinese language and history (under a young tutor named John K. Fairbank), he went to China. There he found a nation in the midst of war and revolution, and began to write about it. Ultimately, he was named chief Asia correspondent for the new *Time* magazine, and stayed in China from 1938 to 1945.

Returning to the United States after seven years, White published *Thunder Out of China*, an account of the Communist revolution which earned him a place on a substantial number of blacklists for his failure to hate Mao and hail Chiang Kai-shek. Soon White was abroad again, covering the European recovery from 1948 to 1953. Out of this emerged *Fire in the Ashes*, another great success. Yet when White returned to America in 1954, no crowd of editors clamored for his services. In the McCarthy period he was a questionable figure, and if he plied his trade with distinction—at the *Reporter* magazine and at *Colliers*, and as a free-lance—he achieved no great fame or wealth. These came only upon publication of *The Making of the President 1960*. After its appearance, White was a star, welcomed by the greats as their chronicler and as a talisman of good political fortune. Everybody had to touch base with Teddy White, for he was going to write it all up for history.

No brief summary can convey the richness of White's account. His opening chapters, on the Boston ghetto, high school, and Harvard, are insightful, witty, at times moving. His chapters on Asia communicate well the excitement of a young man in his twenties, living in the midst of a revolution, meeting the rebel chieftains, Mao and Chou, watching a local war, and seeing in it the origins of a world conflict. The chapters on Europe explain the workings of the Marshall Plan, and report on the politics and politicians of early postwar Europe—Adenauer, Eisenhower, Clay, and Monnet, to name but a few. They also show the changes in White's own perspective as he sees American money rebuild freedom and free markets all over Western

ELLIOTT ABRAMS *writes frequently for* COMMENTARY, the Public Interest, American Spectator, *and other periodicals on politics and social policy.*

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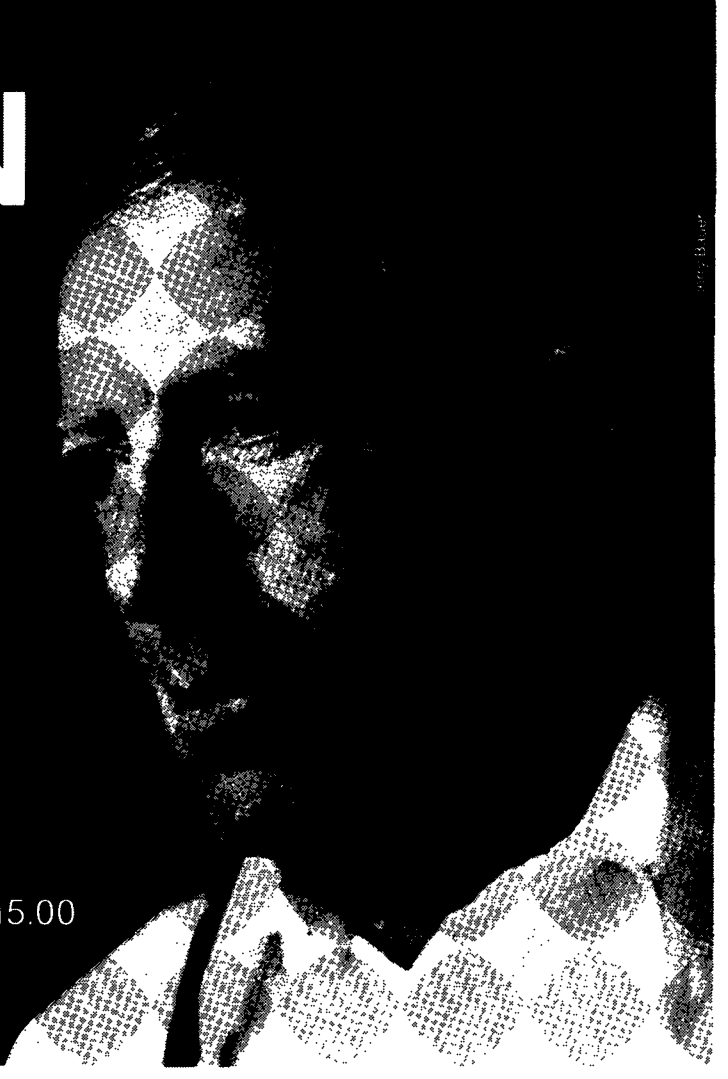

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Europe. White writes of the "dynamics of the trader's world":

> It came to me slowly as I reported affairs from 1947 to 1950, that the values liberals cherish flourish better in the trader's world than in the Pharaonic world. . . . The Marshall Plan had won because it had linked gain with freedom, had assumed that the movement of minds and the movements of peoples must go with the movement of goods and of merchants.

Finally, White's accounts here of the presidential races of the 1960's and 1970's are masterly in their view of tactics and personalities.

BY THE end of these memoirs, indeed on the very last page, White answers the question with which he opens them. Why did he find himself lost in the 1976 campaign? Why did it all, for the first time, seem almost without meaning? His answer is predicated on a theory of American politics—and of American society—that has become more and more explicit in each of his succeeding volumes. White believes that America is a society bound together only by a common faith, politics. In other nations, such as France or Italy, "nationhood descends from ancestral loins" (*Breach of Faith*); Americans, by contrast, come from too many diverse heritages to form such a community. Instead, "politics in America is the binding secular religion." In *Breach of Faith*, White writes of politics as "the faith that had glued Americans to each other in the beginning to make a republic," as "the myth that binds America together." And of all the political myths and common beliefs, the "crowning myth" is that of the Presidency. It is the one office which represents all Americans, and which all Americans act together to fill, choosing the best among them to lead.

All this, White believes, became weakened in the 1960's as one President was assassinated and another forced not to seek reelection, and was then finally destroyed in the 1970's by Richard Nixon. By 1976, instead of serving as a great unifying force, the presidential election campaign had become a mere power struggle between individuals; the nation which had been held together by politics was divided and disunified. White glumly concludes *In Search of History* wondering "whether America would be transformed . . . into a Place, a gathering of discretely defined and entitled groups, interests, and heritages; or whether it could continue to be a nation, where all heritages joined under the same roof-ideas of communities within government."

The trouble, in White's view, lies not so much in our Presidents, or in our way of selecting them, as in ourselves, a society that has lost its faith and is therefore in decline. But is this so? White is certainly persuasive in arguing that the 1976 campaign was a mechanical operation, largely devoid of real purpose. But why not conclude from this not that our society is flawed, but rather our way of choosing Presidents? It is surely an error—most of all in America—to confuse electoral politics with social conditions. And it is another error to think that the only ideas or myths common to all Americans are political, and indeed presidential, in nature.

Consider a single example. In the last twenty-five years, a dominant theme in American life has been the need to expand equality of opportunity—for the poor, for blacks, for women. Equality of opportunity is surely one of the ideals central to the American system, but it is a social as much as a political ideal, and Presidents are marginal to it. One might argue, indeed, that the broadening of equality of opportunity would have proceeded at roughly the same rate in this period *had the result in every presidential election been reversed.* As Ben Wattenberg has demonstrated in *The Real Majority* and *The Real America*, social progress is poorly gauged by the fate of one's favorite candidates, or even by the condition of the electoral system; it may be measured directly by looking at relative income levels, education, life expectancy, and the like. To White, such data are important in that they ultimately affect electoral outcomes. Yet the reverse is true: the data are important in themselves, more important than the electoral outcomes, for the data describe the realities of life in America, and American life is not centered around, nor can it be measured by, electoral politics.

IN HIS refusal to cover the 1976 race, White was among the first commentators to notice its remarkable emptiness. Jules Witcover has described that race as "the ultimate media event," and the campaign struck other observers, too, as an intellectual wasteland in which personal power struggles rather than principled political differences were played out. The difficulty with White's version is that, seeking the broader social meaning of this, he neglects the narrower meaning: that the presidential selection system is faulty. And it is not surprising that he also neglects some of the contributions he may inadvertently have made to the development of its faults.

Many critics of the 1976 campaign have called it too media-oriented; too manipulative; too closely focused on the candidates' personal styles rather than on issues or parties; too much like a great game rather than a fateful choice. One can fairly say that White's view of presidential races, as great contests among individual men for a place in history, is one of the sources of this problem. The recent cult of the Presidency is in no small part his creation, and the present concentration of the media on strategy, tactics, and personality rather than on issues can in some degree be traced to the success and to the influence of White's accounts of our presidential races.

All of this is ironic, if not perverse. Theodore H. White has searched for the tissue which connects the mechanics of our election campaigns with the broader experiences and purposes of our society. Yet his work has been taken by many as exemplifying not a concern for deeper issues but a concern for personality, for inside dope, for details, for tactics. In an odd way, the less talented or more cynical observers have had a clearer view. Our elections are not our history, and our politics is not our life. Pol-

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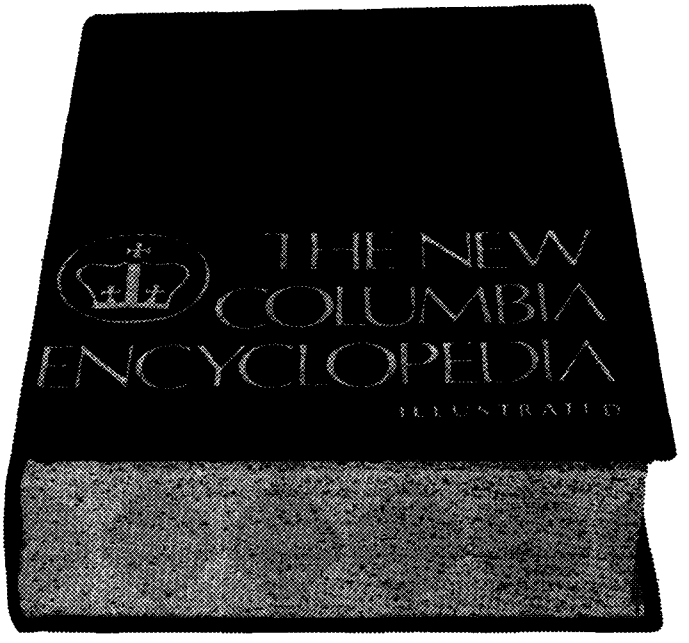

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itics—even presidential politics—provides us with high drama, but is peripheral to the concerns of most Americans. In seeking too deep a meaning in our electoral mechanics, White has mistaken politics for life in society, and political biography for history. Rather than being the historian of America in our time, White is (as, indeed, he often calls himself here) primarily a reporter, and he must be satisfied to know, as his readers do, that of them all he has been the best.

Irrational Man

JANUS. By ARTHUR KOESTLER. *Random House. 354 pp. $10.00.*

Reviewed by JEFFREY MARSH

ARTHUR KOESTLER is now in his seventies, but his approach to received wisdom of all kinds remains that of the *enfant terrible*. His latest work, intended as a summation of the ideas he has expounded in the books he has published over the past twenty-five years, presents in a condensed version a series of iconoclastic views on subjects as varied as evolutionary theory, quantum mechanics, and parapsychology. The highly idiosyncratic way in which Koestler presents his thoughts, however, tells us as much about the author as about his subject.

Koestler opens with a statement of his current credo. Man, he proclaims, is an evolutionary blunder. He has failed to integrate his emotional and intellectual development, his social and personal roles, and his national and international loyalties—with the result that humanity seems unlikely to survive the nuclear age. After this grim introduction, Koestler begins by trying to identify the source of man's failure. While the human brain is capable of impressive feats of rationality, it is flawed, he contends, by a conflict between the neocortex, the "modern" part of the brain, and the older limbic system, which man shares with reptiles and lower mammals. Unfortunately, Koestler is not very enlightening about this concept, which was recently popularized in Carl Sagan's bestseller, *The Dragons of Eden*. "When the psychiatrist bids his patient to lie on the couch," he tells us, "he is asking him to stretch out alongside a horse and a crocodile." Yet for all the picturesqueness of this description, Koestler never makes clear exactly what harmful effects this "schizophysiology" causes.

Following this initial discussion of the brain, Koestler continues with an introduction to the subject of formal systems theory, which is intended to supply a unifying structure to the book. The first question he treats is why man behaves irrationally. For society to function properly, Koestler states, man must assert his own individuality while simultaneously subjecting himself to a variety of social constraints. He suggests that a species-wide imbalance between the emphasis placed on these two roles has led to an overemphasis on group loyalty, thereby explaining the paradox that large-scale destructive behavior generally owes more to the admirable trait of loyalty than to individual selfishness. Koestler then repeats his astonishing suggestion, first made in *The Ghost in the Machine*, that the ultimate solution to this problem lies in the development of a drug which will enable men to reconcile reason with emotion. He tells us, moreover, that the nation which first discovers and applies such a technique will be able, because of its superior utilization of rational thought, to attain world leadership.

AFTER a digression in which he summarizes his earlier work in creativity, Koestler returns to the subject of evolution. He provides an extremely sharp critique of the Neo-Darwinian theory which has become generally accepted in the past century. The basic concept, that of survival of the fittest, is ridiculed as tautological, since fitness in this context is only defined in terms of survival. Koestler then points out the major shortcomings of the mechanisms which have been proposed to account for the development of new species. First, mutations do not occur at a fast enough rate, even taking into account the geological time scale, to allow new species to appear as rapidly as they have done. Second, the specialized nature of the genetic adaptations which have occurred in different species is so great that the idea of their being produced randomly defies reason. For example, it is hard to believe that individual random mutations could account for the development of a thin-shelled egg with a differentiation in its internal constitution between yolk and white, and, simultaneously, for the temporary appearance on the beak of the embryonic chick of a vestigial tooth to break the egg open. Similarly, no plausible mechanism has been put forth to explain the hereditary transmission of complex behavior patterns in different species.

The modern theory that randomly occurring changes in the gene pool eventually result in the evolution of more successful species is, according to Koestler, no more plausible than earlier explanations. In fact, Koestler believes that the recent advances in knowledge brought about by the development of molecular biology make the argument that evolution is a random process even weaker and provide strong support for the teleological view of evolution. In a further departure from modern biological orthdoxy, Koestler suggests that over the course of many generations an awareness appears on the genetic level of the nature of adaptations which will prove useful during the life of the organism.

What is harder to describe rationally is Koestler's reference to Bergson's idea that all living matter possesses in some sense an "awareness" which differentiates it from inanimate material, and which guides the process of evolution. Furthermore, in the particular case of human beings, Koestler avers that there is a less abstract form of awareness which connects man to the universe as a whole, and is demonstrated by the phenomenon of parapsychology. With considerable vagueness, he makes

JEFFREY MARSH *is a consultant on energy economics.*

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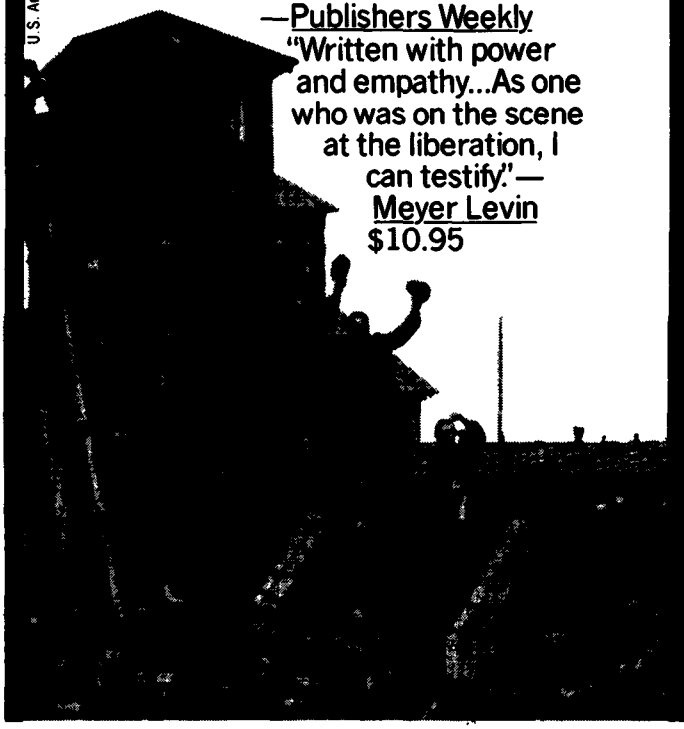

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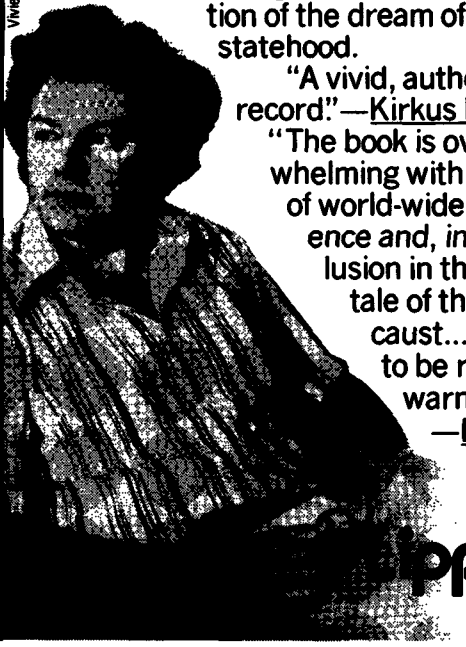

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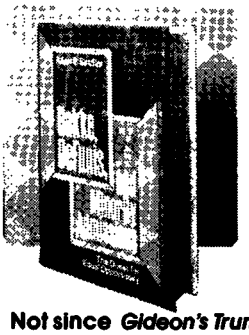

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connections between this mystical cosmic awareness, also hinted at in the works of Jung, and the concepts of time and space introduced by the theories of modern physics.

Koestler concludes with his belief that the resolution of all the problems he has raised depends on humanity's learning to use its brain to its fullest potential. He compares the brain in our present state of awareness to a sophisticated computer placed in the hands of an ignorant storekeeper in a primitive bazaar. By trial and error, the storekeeper will be able to learn to use the machine to perform simple arithmetic, but generations will have to pass before it is even possible to formulate the problems which the computer is really designed to solve.

Clearly, Koestler is not afraid to be out of step with current orthodoxy in any discipline. But his keen eye for the weaknesses of other people's theories is not matched by a high regard for either rigor or consistency in his own arguments. To take one example: if both precognition and telepathy are among the potentials of a purposefully-evolving brain, why have these powers remained latent, in spite of the obvious practical advantage each would offer to a human species which has developed many less relevant mental activities? Koestler does not address himself to this question, or to many others which might prove equally damaging to his theories.

It is interesting to trace Koestler's fascination with the problem of the conflict between group loyalty and self-assertion, one of the major themes of the book, to his own history, which has shown an unusual degree of oscillation between one extreme and the other. Born in Hungary, he went to Vienna as a young man to study engineering. Shortly before completing his studies, however, he became an ardent Zionist and emigrated abruptly to what was then Palestine; yet no sooner had he arrived than disillusion set in. He thereupon turned to Communism, becoming such a dedicated Communist that he moved to the Soviet Union, where he changed once again—this time into a convinced anti-Communist. Imprisoned and sentenced to death in Spain during the Spanish Civil War (which he had been covering for an English newspaper), Koestler underwent a mystical experience which led to his subsequent long-lasting interest in psychological and philosophical problems. In the meantime, he wrote a number of well-received novels based on his varied experiences. He pronounced the need for all Jews to opt either for life in the new state of Israel or for total assimilation in the Diaspora. Koestler chose the latter course and has lived for many years in England where, although not quite a member of the establishment, he has nevertheless managed to become a fixture on the English literary scene. In his last previous work, *The Thirteenth Tribe*, he proclaimed his belief in the somewhat bizarre theory of the Khazar origin of Ashkenazic Jewry. Like that work, *Janus* is perhaps best described as a curiosity.

A Minority's Minorities

A Coat of Many Colors: Jewish Subcommunities in the United States. Edited by Abraham D. Lavender. *Greenwood. 324 pp. $17.95.*

Reviewed by Julius Weinberg

It is an operating assumption of the "new pluralism" that there is greater heterogeneity in American life than was once believed by academic sociologists and social planners alike. *A Coat of Many Colors: Jewish Subcommunities in the United States* is a product of this view. Like Americans in general, writes the editor, Abraham D. Lavender, American Jews are more various than one might think; they cannot simply be "characterized as a white, middle-class group, primarily of German or East European background, concentrated in the Northeast part of the United States or at least in urban areas of the

Julius Weinberg *is professor of history at Cleveland State University. He is currently at work on a history of American Jewry since 1945.*

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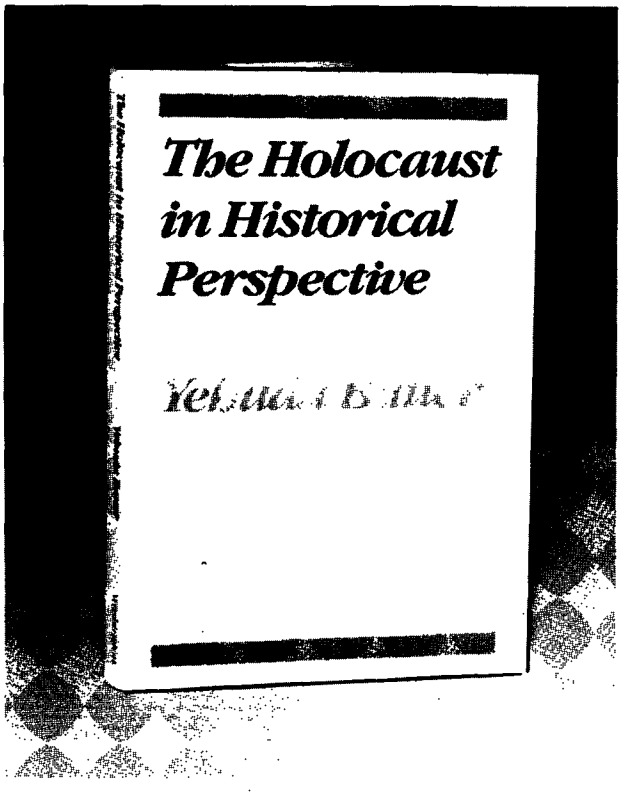
country, acculturated into the American society, and led by males." Although Lavender does agree that this characterization is not altogether inaccurate—after all, 99 per cent of American Jews *are* white, their income level *is* far above average, 98 per cent *do* have European backgrounds, and nearly two-thirds *do* live in the Northeast —it is his contention, and the purpose of his collection of essays to demonstrate, that it by no means accounts for all of American Jewry.

A Coat of Many Colors consists of essays culled from a variety of sources on a number of "minorities" in the American Jewish community: small-town Jews, poor Jews, Hasidim, black Jews, Jewish women, and Sephardim. A quick glance reveals that Lavender has been eclectic in his choice of "minorities" and has not limited himself to a single theme or guiding principle; some of his categories are the results of geography, others of economic status, and still others can be accounted for by gender, migrational patterns, or religious affiliations. Given the lack of thematic unity, a volume like this one stands or falls on the quality of its selections or the skills of its editor. In this rare instance, the editor triumphs over his material; in his various introductions and notes, Lavender has provided a wealth of scholarly information and has made this work a bibliographical treasure for readers unable or unwilling to make their way through the large literature on various groups in American Jewish life. As for the selections themselves in *A Coat of Many Colors*, the most that can be said for them is that some were well worth including and others had better remain forgotten.

Four essays on small-town Jews constitute the first segment of Lavender's collection. Much of the material, while informative, is rather impressionistic, and on the basis of it one would hesitate to come to any hard conclusions. Peter I. Rose, a sociologist, finds small-town living for Jews a positive experience; Eugen Schoenfeld, another sociologist, finds it to be a negative one. On the relation of small-town Jews to their non-Jewish environment, any number of variables seem to make a crucial difference: what the individual family brings by way of Jewish identity; the aspirations it sets for itself as a family unit; the number of Jews who live in the community, which determines whether or not a synagogue or Hebrew school can be established; where the town is located—in New York State or in Louisiana; and how far it is from an urban center.

Despite the differences expressed in these essays, one fact remains clear: Jews tend to settle in small towns for the economic opportunities they offer and rarely, by choice,



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on other grounds. This is hardly a new phenomenon. Decades ago the Yiddish poet J. J. Schwartz depicted (in *Kentucky*) the fate of three generations of Jews in a small town in the upper South after the grandfather, a Litvak peddler, was asked by his Gentile customers to come and settle among them. The resulting terms of life as portrayed by Schwartz have not greatly altered since then. For the small-town Jew, Jewish identity, whether expressed in a positive way or repressed in some negative syndrome, is purchased at an emotional and cultural price. Not surprisingly, many second-generation Jews abandon the small towns of their youth for the city; and regardless of the advantages some may see in small-town life, one should not expect the number of small-town Jews to increase in coming years.

If the small town is one "minority" experience for American Jews, the South offers another. In an essay of his own, devoted to the Jewish subculture of the South, Abraham Lavender draws on the writings of W. J. Cash, Willie Morris, William Faulkner, Thomas Wolfe, and others to draw a portrait of the typical Southern Jew. According to Lavender, while the Jew shares the Southerner's Protestant ethic—the virtues of thrift, hard work, and individual advancement—he generally rejects his religious fundamentalism and aggressive regionalism, and tends not to share the white Southerner's racist views.

The difference between old-line Southern Jews, whose ancestors settled in the South in the 18th and 19th centuries, and the first- and second-generation East European Jews who came in more recent times, serves as the theme of an illuminating essay by Theodore Lowi. Through an inquiry into the Jewish community of "Iron City," Lowi posits the existence of two distinct Jewish subcommunities—"old" and "new"—within every Southern town and city, each with its own history, memories, identity, value system, way of life, and mode of relating to the non-Jewish majority. While Lowi finds both groups conservative on social issues and liberal on economic issues, the two groups differ sharply when it comes to Jewish identity and relations with the non-Jewish community. Thus. when the Kahn family, "new" Jews in the haberdashery business, propose that the Jewish congregation of "Iron City" contribute to a reward-fund established for apprehending those who had placed a bomb under a synagogue in nearby Birmingham, Alabama, the "old" Jews argue against the proposal, and in the end prevail. The "old" Jews still carry fearful memories of the Ku Klux Klan, while the "new" Jews cite the fate of those who failed to stand up to the Nazis. On the matter of identity, Lowi finds that "new" Jews favor an ethnic definition of Jewishness, whereas "old" Jews define themselves by religion—although, as Lowi notes, given their lack of religious ritual or belief, their Judaism, in actual fact, tends to assume an ethnic expression.

In a section on the "Jewish poor," a case is made by Ann G. Wolfe for the existence of a sizable number of poor Jews who have been neglected by the organized Jewish community. The charge that the "invisible poor" constitute a serious problem within the community is reinforced by two other selections—sensitive reporting by Elinor Horwitz on elderly Jews from the North who have retired to Miami Beach, and Mark Effron's "Left Behind, Left Alone," a study of Jews who have remained on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Mrs. Wolfe's findings are rejected, however, by Saul Kaplan and James P. Rice of the Jewish Federation of Chicago, and Rice defends the organized Jewish community against the charge of neglect.

It would appear that the controversy over the Jewish poor is more an issue of ideology than of statistics (although there are differences on the latter ground, too). As Mrs. Wolfe suggests in her rejoinder to Kaplan and Rice, there are "unresolved issues in the Jewish community . . . : Who decides what service gets how much money? . . . How are priorities set? Who sets them? . . . Does the Jewish community need to reorder its priori-

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ties?" These are large and possibly unanswerable questions. In the meantime, one is left with the perceptive observations of Dr. Samuel Silverberg, an erudite Jewish physician who is spending his retirement years helping out the *Jewish Daily Forward*. Reviewing the history of the Lower East Side and the condition of the elderly Jews in the area, Dr. Silverberg observes: "People are living in fear everywhere in the country. . . . Colored people themselves live in fear. Jews go to *shul* in groups. They are afraid to go to meetings at night. Things start earlier so people can get home before they find themselves solitary passengers on empty streets." Dr. Silverberg lays the blame for much of this not on the Jewish organizations but on the decline of the extended family structure in America. With sadness, he concludes: "It wasn't supposed to happen this way."

IN THE section on the Hasidim, Lavender includes a scholarly piece on their European origins; essays on the various hasidic groups living in Brooklyn and one on the Squarer Hasidim who fled New York in order to replicate their European *shtetl* in suburban Rockland County; and a portrait of the Lubavitcher *rebbe* which emphasizes his charismatic qualities as a scholar, therapist, and revivalist. While none of these selections addresses itself directly to the question of why Hasidism now enjoys a vogue on the American Jewish scene —particularly among the young— some clues may be found in several of the pieces.

In his portrait of the Lubavitcher *rebbe*, the late Irving Spiegel suggests that the hasidic revival is to a great extent traceable to the singular characteristics of the *rebbe* himself—the catholicity of his interests, the sagacity of his advice, the practicality of his program, the loftiness of his vision. In a more academic vein, Israel Rubin posits the notion that the strength, if not the popularity, of Hasidism lies in its capacity to transcend what sociologists have termed "the eclipse of community," the breakdown of *Gemeinschaft* in modern mass society. Rubin concludes that what Hasidism offers is a kind of portable community, one which is not based on a common place of residence but which still "fulfills the basic functions that community is believed to fulfill."

Despite the superficial attractiveness of this analysis, it is hardly sufficient to explain either Hasidism's current popularity or its historical durability. Ultimately, what enables Hasidism to transcend the so-called "eclipse of community" is *Halakhah*, rabbinic law, the bedrock upon which hasidic faith rests and that which Hasidism has in common with every form of Orthodoxy. The continuing strength of Orthodox Judaism, and the declining strength of all those chic emulations of Hasidism which

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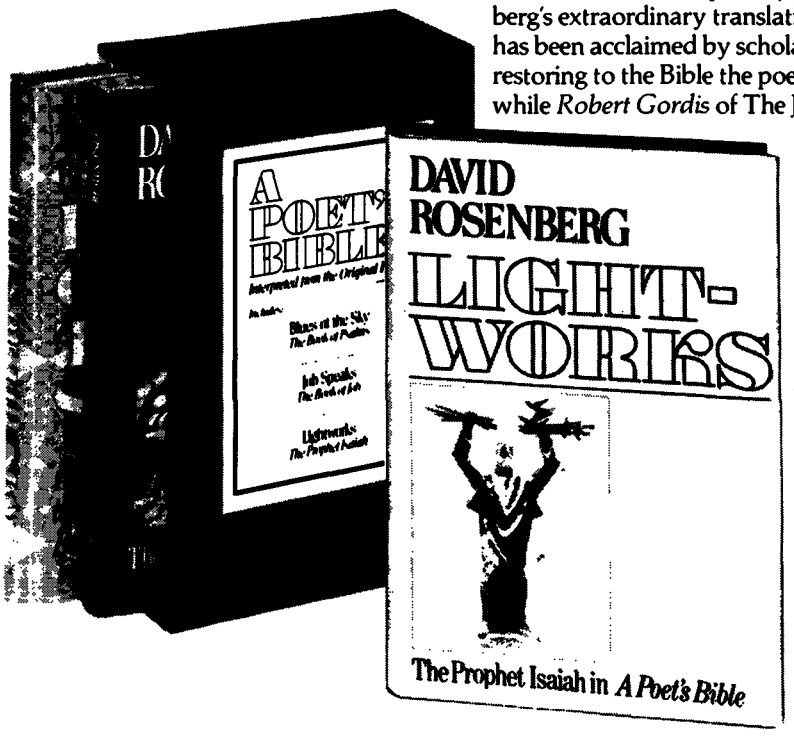

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were a feature of the 60's Jewish counterculture, may offer evidence that it is not Hasidism as such but rather Jewish religious law which provides those socio-psychological supports so many Jews appear to be looking for today.

WHILE Lavender's volume includes a number of selections on Jewish blacks and on the Sephardic Jews who have come to the United States in the 20th century, these groups are not as controversial and do not affect the Jewish community as pervasively as another "minority" movement, women's lib. An essay by Eugene Lipman on the status of women in Jewish tradition concludes, somewhat defensively, that rabbinic law prescribes equality and respect for women, but these conclusions are challenged in selections by two representative "spokespersons" of Jewish feminism. An angry piece by Ruth F. Brin asks, "Can a Woman Be a Jew?" and a more cerebral treatment of the topic by Blu Greenberg poses the question, "Feminism: Is It Good for the Jews?" Both authors advocate greater equality for women before Jewish law and a larger role for women in contemporary Jewish life —in religious ritual at home, in the synagogue, in Jewish education, and in community organizations. Mrs. Brin, however, argues from a point outside traditional religious law, while Mrs. Greenberg appears hopeful that the changes she advocates can be effected within the framework of *Halakhah*.

In retrospect, it was inevitable that the women's-lib controversy would erupt in the Jewish community, given the tension between a millennia-old religious tradition in which women were assigned an inferior status and the upper middle-class position of today's American Jews, a group especially susceptible to avant-garde notions in both politics and culture. It is, in fact, a measure of the extent of Jewish acculturation to American life that the ideas associated with women's lib have moved beyond those Jewish women who are uncommitted or hostile to Jewish traditions and values, and penetrated the thinking of those concerned for the future quality and vitality of the community.

Good intentions are not, however, a substitute for cogent analysis or realistic goals. The essay by Ruth Brin suffers from several shortcomings: a tendency toward selective quotation to document her generalizations about *the* biblical, *the* talmudic, *the* rabbinic attitude toward women (as the essay by Eugene Lipman shows, similar sources can be cited to make points opposite to Mrs. Brin's); a lack of historical perspective, and especially a failure to recognize that the historical process has itself continuously affected the status and rights of the Jewish wife and mother, usually for the better; and a failure to recognize that *generally* Jewish tradition and practice have been favorable to women.

The central flaw in Blu Greenberg's highly ideological essay stems

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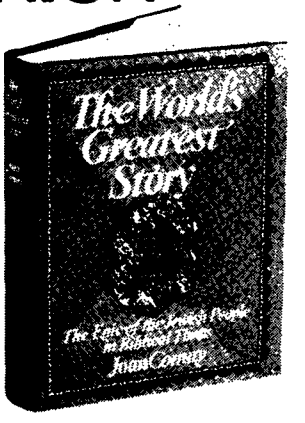

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from her desire to have the best of all worlds, and at no cost. Mrs. Greenberg wants to preserve her commitment to the *Halakhah,* a relatively changeless body of religious law, and at the same time to enjoy all the fruits of modernity—feminism, innovative family roles, abortion—to "upgrade" the status of women in the synagogue, the home, and the community. Yet given the glacier-like pace with which the Orthodox rabbinate approaches even the most minute of proposed alterations in the *Halakhah,* it is completely unrealistic to expect Mrs. Greenberg's many suggestions to be adopted soon. Her ability to ignore this, and to go on blithely advocating a kind of do-it-yourself *Halakhah* for Jewish women, amounts to a kind of deception.

WHAT are the future prospects of "minorities" in American Jewish life? The acculturative process which is eroding the social, ethnic, and geographic differences among Americans generally has been having its inevitable impact upon the Jewish community. While poor Jews, black Jews, and Hasidim may remain identifiable subcommunities, other Jews who want to adhere to a distinctive way of life while eschewing Orthodoxy may ultimately find it necessary to follow the example, if not the precepts, of the Squarer Hasidim, and create for themselves a "reservation" where they can resist the homogenizing processes of American life. As for the Orthodox themselves, whether of the hasidic variety or not, they will no doubt hold out the longest of all; and they may well find themselves numerically rewarded rather than punished for their obduracy.

Police Work

HIDDEN TERRORS. By A. J. LANGGUTH. *Pantheon. 339 pp. $10.00.*

Reviewed by MARK FALCOFF

THE subtitle of this book, by a former New York *Times* bureau chief in Saigon, is "The Truth About U.S. Police Operations in Latin America," but in reality it ranges far wider. In fact, it is three volumes in one: an account of the career of Dan Mitrione, a former Indiana police chief who, while on loan to the Uruguayan government, was kidnapped and murdered by urban guerrillas in 1970; a purported "insider's" account of the overthrow of the Goulart regime in Brazil in 1964 and its aftermath; and a brief narrative of the decline of democracy in Uruguay, with special attention to those events which later figured in Costa-Gavras's film, *State of Siege* (1973).

In Langguth's opinion, all three of these stories are part of a larger tapestry of U.S. intervention in Latin America. His purpose, apparently, is to establish this country's responsibility for the inhu-

MARK FALCOFF *teaches Latin American history at the University of Oregon.*

General Lucius D. Clay, U.S. Military Governor, European Command, 1947. U.S. Army photograph.

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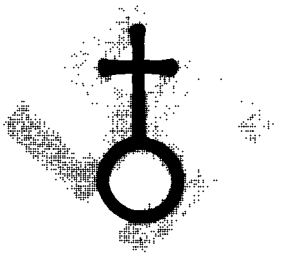

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mane conduct of police forces in Brazil and Uruguay, and, in a larger focus, for the decline of democratic institutions in these (and presumably other) Latin American countries. As such, *Hidden Terrors* is another contribution to the growing literature of what might be called the Black Legend of American Foreign Policy.

The problem with the book is that its thesis can be sustained only by reading it very quickly and uncritically. Insofar as the recent political history of Brazil and Uruguay is concerned it shows so little knowledge (particularly of Uruguay), that one is bound to ask how long the author spent in either country, and under what circumstances. It would be ponderous for a reviewer to dwell upon all of the errors of fact (and of Spanish and Portuguese orthography) which blemish the account, but it must be emphasized that much of what the author would have the reader accept as fact is actually nothing more than someone else's opinion, cleverly marshaled. Thus: The Archbishop of São Paulo "forbade his bishops to join in [an anti-Communist] march because *he said* it had been organized by McCann Erikson, the U.S. advertising agency" (emphasis added). Or: *"To some Brazilians,* the foreign-aid program of the Eisenhower years, and even the Alliance for Progress, was a sham so long as five times more dollars were leaving Brazil in the form of earnings, dividends, and royalties than were entering the country as new direct investment" (emphasis added).

Other statements, made more categorically, are ripped out of their historical context. For example, we are told that President Vargas of Brazil (whom the author evidently wishes to represent as a right-wing dictator) came to power in 1930 "as the beneficiary of a popular rebellion led by coffee growers protesting a drop in world coffee prices." As a matter of fact, the protest was over the failure of the Brazilian government to expand crop subsidies to less favored regions (including Vargas's own state of Rio Grande do Sul), and the effect of the revolution of 1930 was to break forever the dominance in Brazilian politics of a handful of privileged coffee-growing areas. Also, while it is true, as the author says, that at a 1962 meeting with Richard Goodwin, Ché Guevara "put forth a number of suggestions to ease relations" between the United States and Cuba, "including a promise to pay for the U.S. property that Cuba had expropriated," this does not prove that Cuba "[was] not an intractable foe of the United States," especially when the conditions which Guevara established (not mentioned by Langguth) are taken into account.

In his lengthy version of events leading up to the 1964 military coup in Brazil, Langguth refers to a number of sources, both official and unofficial, which he places at the back of the book. Unfortunately, he does not distinguish among

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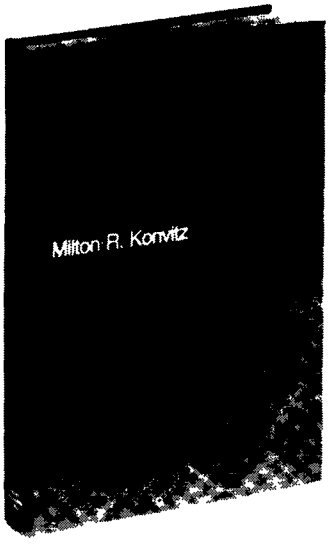

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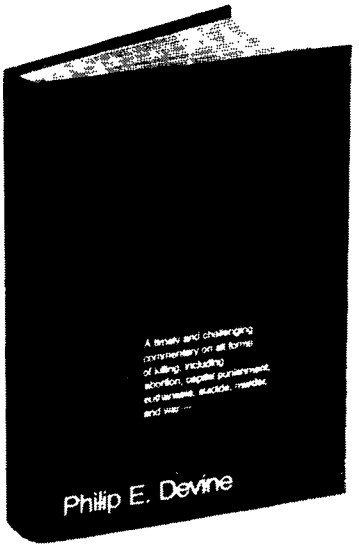

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them; moreover, they are not always brought to bear at critical moments. For example, no source whatever is given to explain the following statement: "Tentative arrangements were made for secret help if that became necessary: clandestine arms dropped in by air, tankers docking at Santos with U.S. oil if the Communists succeeded in seizing Petrobras [the state oil monopoly]." We are told that "Top Secret" communiqués from the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington (now presumably declassified?) "indicated how much the Pentagon was relying on [U.S. Ambassador] Lincoln Gordon and his staff to direct the U.S. role in the coup." And we are asked to believe that "during his stopover in Rio in early March, General Andrew O'Meara, the commander of the U.S. Southern Command, had promised to fly paratroopers out of the Panama Canal zone and drop them into any pockets of resistance left"—on the credit of Robinson Rojas Sandford, a Chilean journalist whose reputation for mendacity is almost unequaled in Latin America.

THE real centerpiece of *Hidden Terrors*, however, is not an exposé of the strings by which Washington purportedly manipulates Latin American politics, but the alleged systematic export of torture devices and practices through the training of Latin American security forces in Washington, Panama, and elsewhere by agencies of the United States government.* This part of the book is not recommended for those with weak stomachs, for the descriptions of various interrogation practices are as detailed as any anatomical textbook (and a good deal more unsettling). I must say, however, that I was surprised at the incredible crudity of the methods in use—they hardly bespeak the last word in *Yanqui* technology.

But even here we find that Langguth wants us to reach the "right" conclusions without himself taking full responsibility for the evidence. Much of what we are told on this subject in the case of Uruguay comes from two discharged police inspectors, who even the author admits are unsavory characters. One of them "*understood* that [torture] *equipment came to Montevideo in*side the U.S. Embassy's diplomatic pouch" (emphasis added). Langguth immediately adds that former CIA agent Philip Agee (*Inside the Company*) "could have informed [the police inspector] that the CIA routinely sent its equipment through the pouch. Even a lie detector, large as a suitcase. . . . Audio equipment and bugging equipment came the same way." But we are *still searching for the torture device* in the bag—and even Langguth and Agee have not yet found it for us.

What Langguth does supply is a series of statements which establish beyond doubt that a number

* I have questioned the veracity of this charge elsewhere: "The Uruguay That Never Was: A Historian Looks at Costa-Gavras's *State of Siege*," *Journal of Latin American Lore*, II, 2 (1976), pp. 239-56.

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of people in Uruguay and Brazil *believe* (or, in the case of the discharged policemen, choose to believe) that the United States is responsible for the export of torture to their countries. In Brazil, "prisoners compared notes, and some told of seeing U.S. markings on the field telephones and the electric generators used for electric shocks. . . . All of them attributed the new Brazilian efficiency [in interrogation] to the United States government." "She [a revolutionary] would never forgive the United States for its role in training and equipping the Brazilian police." Langguth also provides some provocative non sequiturs: "In Portugal [intelligence officers] were boasting to their victims that a grade-school education was no longer sufficient for their work. The new interrogation methods were too complicated. The source of [their] improved technical expertise *seemed* clear enough. U.S. officials from the Lisbon Embassy called regularly at [police] headquarters" (emphasis added). Or a Brazilian journalist purportedly *learned* that Dan Mitrione "had bestowed [unspecified] technical equipment on the [Uruguayan] secret police; that the U.S. had introduced a system of nationwide identity cards. . . . ; that torture had become routine at the *jefatura* [police headquarters]" (emphasis added).

When it comes right down to cases, however, *Hidden Terrors* can make only two claims: that torture is widespread in both Uruguay and Brazil, and that its increasing use in recent years coincides chronologically with the arrival of U.S. police-training missions in both these countries. It also coincides chronologically with a good deal else, which Langguth does not dwell upon. Even so, he concedes that torture "was not a total novelty in Uruguay" before the U.S. missions. And he admits that no one ever saw Mitrione torture a prisoner. He also grants that at the U.S.-run International Police Academy instructors deplored the use of torture in interrogations, but quickly makes his own judgment that "this was less because it was morally indefensible, than because they considered it self-defeating." Then, however, he adds, "their students sometimes had different opinions." Just so.

Torture is an important topic in today's news. Langguth could have made a more meaningful contribution had he been willing to admit that Latin American police do not need to come to Washington, or to receive emissaries from the United States, in order to oppose Marxism (or what they perceive to be Marxism) and to employ against it extremely forceful, often brutal, methods of interrogation. Much of Langguth's problem resides in an ideological reluctance to recognize the profoundly conservative strains at work in Latin American societies. For its part, Amnesty International, in its 1972 report on torture, carefully skirted the question of U.S. responsibility and insisted that many offenses against human rights in Latin America were, regrettably, embedded within the historical and cultural context of the area. Precisely what one does about this is difficult to say, but it should not be supposed that electrical generators and field telephones are obtainable only in the United States, much less the will to use and misuse them.

Hidden Terrors also raises another question of increasing importance—the issue of terror and counter-terror in non-Communist societies. It is all very well for Langguth to rehearse the secular inequalities of Uruguay and Brazil, and to conclude that those who rebel against them are inspired by a moral principle which he prefers to liken to primitive Christianity. But in the societies these revolutionaries establish once they gain power, one will look in vain for the saintly qualities which so impress Langguth. This does not, of course, justify the use of official torture against such persons under any circumstances. But the cases of Italy, Israel, and Northern Ireland—to go no further—suggest that communities with a more deeply-rooted democratic tradition and a far more equitable social structure are every bit as vulnerable to urban guerrilla warfare as the dark bastions of Iberian culture to the

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South. To what degree civilian control of the police (and hence, the prohibition of torture) can be sustained in environments increasingly sundered by "romantic" bombings, kidnappings, and acts of historic vandalism is an open question. It is a problem which ought to disturb us every bit as much as Langguth's melancholy tale of the doings in the police commissaries of Rio, Montevideo, and Belo Horizonte.

Two Views of Equality

THE CULTURE OF INEQUALITY. By MICHAEL LEWIS. *University of Massachusetts Press. 224 pp. $12.50.*

THE PURSUIT OF EQUALITY IN AMERICAN HISTORY. By J. R. POLE. *University of California Press. 380 pp. $14.95.*

Reviewed by
JAMES A. NUECHTERLEIN

"EQUALITY" has become one of the great conjuring terms of our times, a concept which everyone invokes and which everyone declares to be central to our politics, but which is customarily defined in whatever manner suits the convenience of the critic or political leader who happens to be invoking it. These two books grapple in very different ways with the issue of equality, and although one of them is so far superior to the other that it almost belongs in a separate class, neither is fully satisfactory. J. R. Pole, in *The Pursuit of Equality in American History,* is judicious to a fault, almost too aware of complexity, while Michael Lewis, in *The Culture of Inequality,* trivializes the problem by turning it into a moral fable.

Lewis's book does have, if nothing else, the virtue of simplicity. A culture of inequality arises, the author says, from the need to explain and justify unequal outcomes in a society ostensibly dedicated to equal opportunity. American society rationalizes disparities in in-

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come and status by clinging to the "individual-as-central sensibility" which explains success or failure solely in terms of personal qualities. We all, according to Lewis, are forced to try for success, but since there really is not much room at the top in capitalist society, most of us face a notable gap between aspiration and achievement. This produces deep feelings of failure and self-doubt; to compensate for these, we "counterfeit" success: we buy big cars, join voluntary associations to experience at least small-scale triumphs, and exploit our children by appropriating their successes for ourselves. But our chief consolation, according to Lewis, lies in looking down on those whose failure is even more complete than our own.

It thus turns out that poverty, race, educational failure, and crime —social ills which we may have thought we wanted to be rid of— are in fact necessary to us. We need the visible presence of the poor and the outcast to reassure us of our own worth. Only their "unequivocal" failures sustain our fragile egos. And thus we initiate social programs whose effect, and whose real, if hidden, purpose, is to perpetuate those glaring inequalities they are ostensibly intended to eliminate but which our psychological need requires us to maintain.

How does Professor Lewis know that this is so? Because—here his simplicity becomes simple-mindedness—we allow inequality to persist. Surely, Lewis suggests, a nation that "can conquer space" has the ability, if only it had the will, to solve all its social problems; that it does not do so proves that it must not want to. Just how American society manages to engineer this sabotage is not clear; from Lewis's account, one can only stand in awe of a society that so cleverly comes up with programs whose plausibility is great enough to hide, even from itself, their intended failure. Lewis's specific attacks on government programs come out of the "double-bind" school of social criticism: when society leaves the poor to their own devices, it is callous; when it intervenes to assist them, it is intrusive and coercive.

Lewis's prescription for the good society is as simple as his indictment of the present, evil one. In his view, a good society would be one in which an "economics of collective welfare" would replace the present system of "individual acquisitiveness," so that men and women would gain self-esteem primarily from their "contribution to the commonweal." Yet this passion for the common good would in no way diminish individual initiative, distinctiveness, or ambition. In other words, Lewis wants it both ways: perfect community united with perfect individualism. One is reminded of Lucy in the *Peanuts* cartoon, demanding of life "all sweet and no bitter."

As WITH so many radical critics, Lewis appears to have little sense of what the people he writes about are actually like. From his perspective, virtually all Americans, poor and non-poor alike, are devoid of moral will or autonomy. They are simply people to whom things happen. The poor, especially, "have no real control" over the conditions of their lives; they are always objects, never subjects, and always less than fully human.

But Lewis is no less condescending to the non-poor majority. They too are victims—in their case, of a pervasive cultural myth which they have not the wit or self-sufficiency to penetrate. "Otherwise good and decent people" are turned by the system into bigots and racists; they have no alternative values or resources with which to counteract the insidious myths of a monolithic capitalist culture. Lewis's moral universe is perfectly symmetrical: it contains no guilt, no virtue, no humanity.

If Lewis opened his eyes to actual life he would see that people are not so simple as he supposes. If he attended to the material he himself gathered interviewing residents of a Midwestern urban community he calls "Middle City," he would find their attitudes toward success and failure far more nuanced than he imagines—far more nuanced, in fact, than his own. However much some of them may underestimate the obstacles which the poor face,

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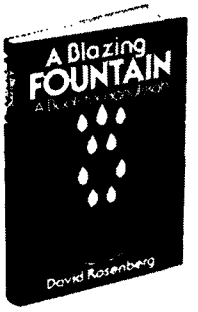
they at least view them as being, in some measure, responsible for their own lives, and none of them commits Lewis's error of imagining that success and failure, if they are not solely the result of individual effort and talent, must therefore be solely a function of social structure. The realities of organized social life involve complexities and ambiguities that cannot begin to find expression in Lewis's crude melodrama.

J. R. Pole deals with equality not as a single idea but as a congeries of impulses that have found significant expression in America in half-a-dozen different categories: equality before the law, equality of political rights, equality of religion, equality of opportunity, equality of sex, and equality of esteem. Through most of American history, Pole shows, the idea of equality has taken the form not of a specific goal but of what Giovanni Sartori has called a "protest ideal," more a mode of political debate than a well-defined object. Pole notes that on the relatively rare occasions when equality has come to the fore as a policy goal, that goal has seldom been the redistribution of wealth or the restructuring of the fundamental procedures of economic reward. In Pole's apt summary, Americans have "wanted a society run on egalitarian principles without wanting a society of equals," and have persistently identified equality with individual rights and with individual distinctions.

When it comes to the relationships among success, self-esteem, and equality, Pole makes more sense in two-and-a-half pages than Lewis does in his entire book. Pole demonstrates that when ordinary people measure their success, they compare themselves not with the extremes of rich or poor but with those of similar origins and opportunities. They do not "need" the presence of unequivocal failures in order to think well of themselves.

Pole's discussion is careful, dispassionate, and balanced, in refreshing contrast to Lewis. Yet his book is not beyond criticism. It is awkwardly organized; it contains



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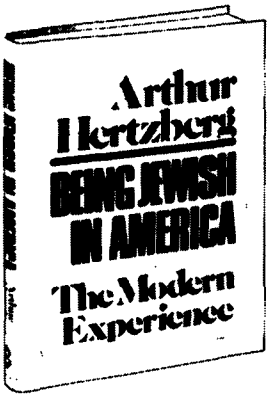

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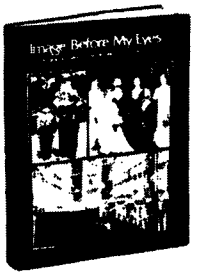

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excessive amounts of familiar constitutional history, particularly in the sections on religion and race; and it is correspondingly sparse in the kinds of literary evidence which would have enriched it as intellectual history. On certain topics Pole appears too aware of the conventional wisdom: his chapter on women's rights is unoriginal in substance and overly tentative in its analysis. He also carefully skirts the issue of affirmative action and its problematic relationship to individual rights, and he does not thoroughly consider the new inequalities that sometimes arise as a consequence of the drive to eliminate old inequalities. Still, if Pole does not always pursue his answers as far as one would like, he raises most of the necessary questions, and for this one must be grateful.

TAKEN together, these two books can be usefully viewed as reflecting a growing polarization in the current debate over equality—between, in short, those who emphasize equality of opportunity and those who emphasize equality of results. The origins of this polarization are worth pursuing briefly.

Throughout American history, many on the Left have implicitly assumed a natural harmony between equality of opportunity and equality of results. Often this assumption has been couched in negative terms. In the Populist tradition, for example, it has consistently been argued that one could logically infer unequal opportunity from unequal results: if the economic game ends with prizes distributed disproportionately among the players, then the game's rules must somehow have been rigged. Relatively few Americans have pondered fully the implications of John C. Calhoun's argument—which Pole cites—that inequality of condition is the natural product of equality of opportunity.

In the postwar period, however, Calhoun's point has taken on added force as the expansion of equal rights and opportunities—while probably contributing to the rise in general prosperity and the decline in absolute poverty—has nonetheless produced little in the

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way of redistribution of income. Recent studies by James Coleman, Christopher Jencks, and others indicate that, in education, and presumably elsewhere, equal opportunities do not by themselves guarantee equal outcomes. It now seems clear that any drive for equality of condition will have to assume a conflict rather than a congruence with equality of opportunity.

That conflict will likely make the debate over equality more intense than ever before in our history, for, as Pole notes, our choice is not between equality and inequality but between different versions of equality. Compromises between the two versions are not, of course, difficult to imagine (e.g., supplementing continued equal opportunity with a guaranteed minimum income and a continuing system of progressive taxation), but the simple fact that we are now aware of social contradictions we had earlier ignored will require significant intellectual adjustment.

In the continuing debate, books like Pole's will help, though they mark only a starting point; books like Lewis's will get us nowhere at all. Whatever direction the debate takes, it will be useful to keep in mind one of Pole's final points: equity, or fairness, is a higher moral imperative than equality; and while the two concepts may, in certain circumstances, have similar implications, they are not simply interchangeable.

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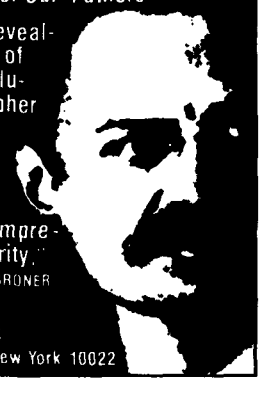

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ful, is generally insipid, often painfully confused, and embarrassingly hypocritical. It is also a difficult volume to read, for *Primacy or World Order* is riddled with typographical errors and misprints, and the syntax often defies translation. One is hard-pressed to explain the high praise this book has received, unless it is a consequence of the "ripple effect" of Hoffmann's reputation.

The central thesis of *Primacy or World Order* is that we have entered a new phase in the history of international relations. This newness is explained by Hoffmann at great length in a series of discussions of the ways in which all countries have become increasingly interrelated, both economically and strategically. The net effect of these interrelations, according to Hoffmann, has been to render outmoded such concepts as the "balance of power," as well as the policies that flow from them. In their place, he recommends that the United States now adopt a general strategy of accommodation: we must content ourselves with seeking tentative and moderate measures which will help create a world "order." In this order, the United States will play a constructive but relatively minor role. The book ends with a melancholy reflection:

> If we know in what direction we want to go, if we have in mind a course that would bring us to port battered perhaps, but together, and if we aim for a port that would be inhospitable only to a handful of irreconcilables, we shall have at least a chance, if we are skillful, to bring us there. . . . If we are uncertain, or if we indulge in familiar hubris . . . the best we can hope for is zigzagging through the storms . . . and being tossed around in permanent seasickness. That may well be our fate, anyhow. But it cannot be our goal.

Behind the unanchored (unlashed?) metaphor and the final burst of existentialism, there is a message of sorts. If world "order" is to be achieved, any hope of American primacy must be abandoned. Hoffmann thus proposes a retreat: an end to any meaningful ideological confrontation with totalitarianism (with the exception of those weak tyrannies of the Right which he particularly dislikes, and over which we can exercise leverage); an end to the use of economic leverage vis-à-vis the Soviet Union; an end to resisting anti-American movements around the world, even in Western Europe and Latin America. We should trust in diversity, encourage the new nationalist forces (particularly in Africa), and prepare for some unpleasantries. Above all, we should not permit our own feelings (or such outmoded concepts as the "national interest") to cloud our vision because when we do, we just create havoc. America may not have much influence over the future of the world, but "our power, when it is misguided, has for all its limits a vast capacity for harm." This capacity must be curbed.

To be sure, Hoffmann recognizes that the Soviet Union may not wish to be a party to such games. He concedes that the Russians have contributed very little to the Third World, and that they may be quick to exploit opportunities created by the policies he favors. But he is not worried. Indeed, his strategic recommendations show a great deal of optimism. They are, in fact, strikingly similar to the policies of the Carter administration: abandon long-range land- and sea-based cruise missiles; abandon the MX missile system; abandon the neutron bomb. "Such restraint," he writes, "would be either in preparation for, or in lieu of, formal agreements." If the Russians failed to respond in kind, the United States would still be well placed to resume the strategic competition.

This unilateral largesse can perhaps be explained by Hoffmann's misunderstanding of one basic point: the Soviet threat to our land-based missile system. He writes, for example, that qualitative controls need to be established over strategic systems "before the accuracy of MIRVed and MARVed missiles begins to suggest the possibility of a controlled counterforce or countercity nuclear war." This is a complete non sequitur, for the current debate over the Minuteman system rests on the fact that such a

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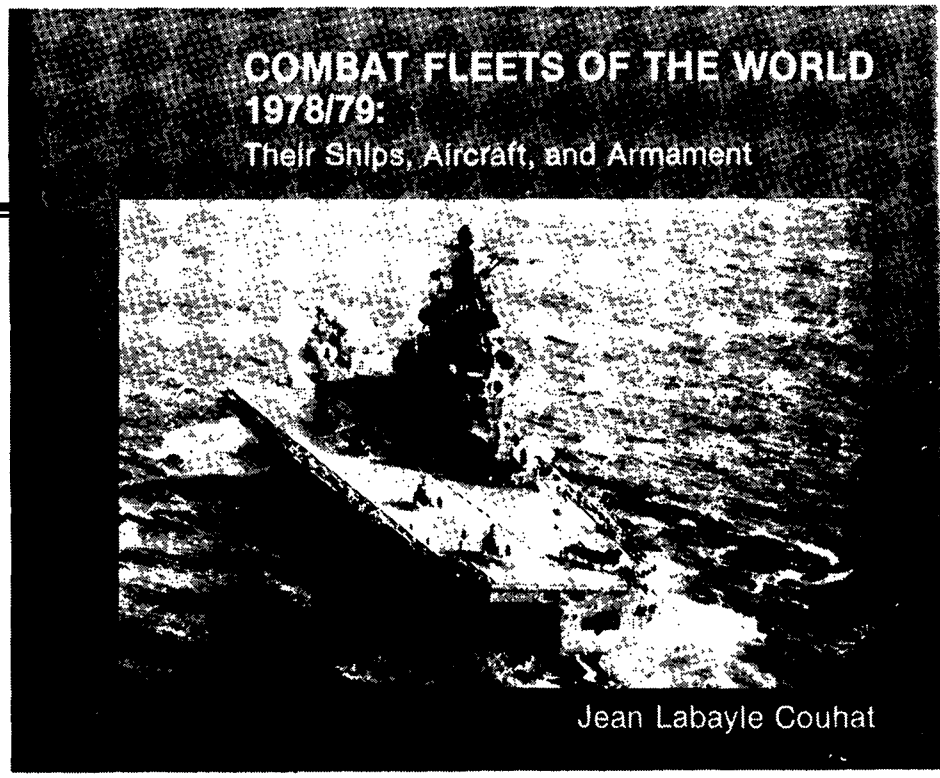

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threat already exists, not on the possibility that it may exist in the distant future. And as for the debate over a countercity nuclear war, that began the hour after Hiroshima.

BUT if Hoffmann is sanguine about our prospects in the strategic contest with the Soviet Union, and believes that moderation must be the keynote of our relations with that country, he is quite prepared to advocate harsh, even revolutionary, interference with countries he does not like. Toward the end of the book he lays out his African strategy:

> In southern Africa, we must pursue the Rhodesian effort undertaken by Kissinger; we have decided to put firmer pressure on Smith by repudiating the Byrd amendment and applying a strict embargo on sales of chrome. We shall have to keep on the pressure, in cooperation with Britain and with black Africa's states around Rhodesia. In the case of Pretoria, what is needed now is a combination of disapproval of those South African policies that would deepen the gap between it and black Africa, diplomatic pressure toward reform, an embargo on any arms transfers, and the discouragement of new investment. If these measures fail to move the South African regime toward majority rule, we may have to provide diplomatic and financial support to black nationalist groups, directly or through the OAU.

This, from a man who shrinks in horror at the thought of American assistance to anti-Communist governments in Western Europe!

Ironically, Hoffmann's picture of the world turns out to be in some ways quite similar to the views of Henry Kissinger, a man whose policies he deplores. Hoffmann, like Kissinger, wants to ensnare the Russians in a network of commercial and political ties to the West. Like Kissinger, he believes that to challenge the Russians on the grounds of their systematic violation of human rights only worsens the plight of Soviet citizens. Like Kissinger, too, he thinks the overriding interest of the United States is in an orderly world, and that we should therefore push for new international institutions. Where he strikes out on his own is in his concern that we behave with moderation and restrain our activist impulses and in his bold-faced application of a double standard: we must not meddle in the affairs of our left-wing opponents, but we can, and we should, sabotage the security of our right-wing allies; we are not to use strategic "bargaining chips" with the Soviet Union, but we should have swapped our continued military presence on the ground in South Korea for an improvement in the human-rights posture of the Seoul regime.

The plain fact is that despite numerous disclaimers, Hoffmann has accepted most of the cant and argumentation of revisionist historiography. The cold war, he writes, established an American consensus resulting from both "the *style* of Stalin's postwar diplomacy and from the way in which America interpreted it—as a grand, global, offensive design to which the imperative, 'no more Munichs,' had to be applied" (emphasis added). Although he observes from time to time that the Russians are not interested in stability or "order," that theirs is a strategy of "movement" with occasional pauses, and that they will exploit any American withdrawal from present levels of strength, he urges policies which depend entirely for their success on the assumption that the Russians will respond in good faith—the very assumption which he has himself cast in doubt.

WHERE does such intellectual confusion stem from? The answer, perhaps, is that Hoffmann, like many Americans, is tired of the old games, and weary of the strains which global responsibilities have produced in the American social fabric. These are sentiments not to be lightly dismissed, but if one entertains them one should at least have the courage to admit that the alternative course they imply carries a price of its own, one that may well be much higher for everyone concerned. For the "order" Hoffmann's policies would produce is not that of a more equitable world, but an "order" dictated by our adversaries.

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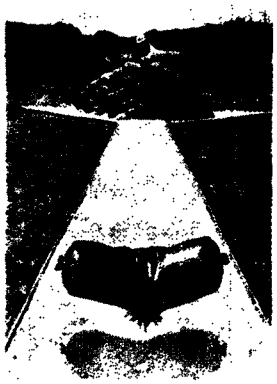

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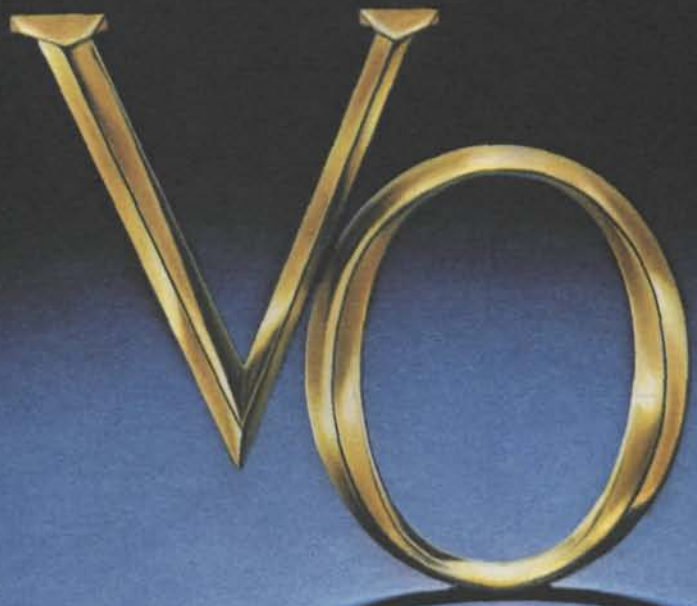

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